

NOVEMBER 1947

The American Mercury

STALIN PLOTTED A SEPARATE PEACE

Donald B. Sanders

PLAIN TALK ABOUT ROMANTIC LOVE

Waverley Roof

THE DANGERS AND CURE OF OBESITY

Milton L. Zisowitz

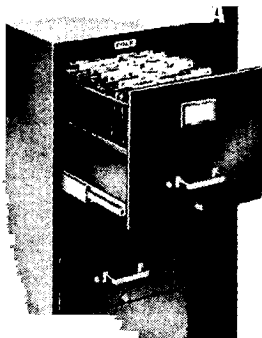
THE CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT FEUD

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THIS IS THE ARAB

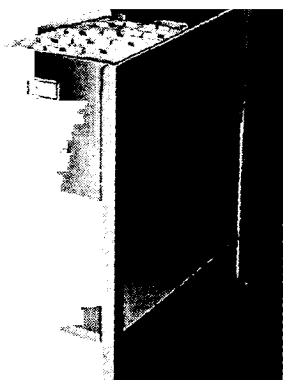
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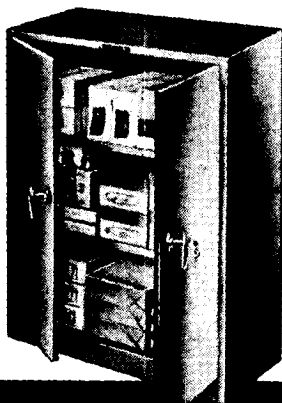
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Natalie Latham Paine
CHAIRMAN
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The American Mercury

with which is combined the magazine, COMMON SENSE

VOLUME LXV

NOVEMBER 1947

NUMBER 287

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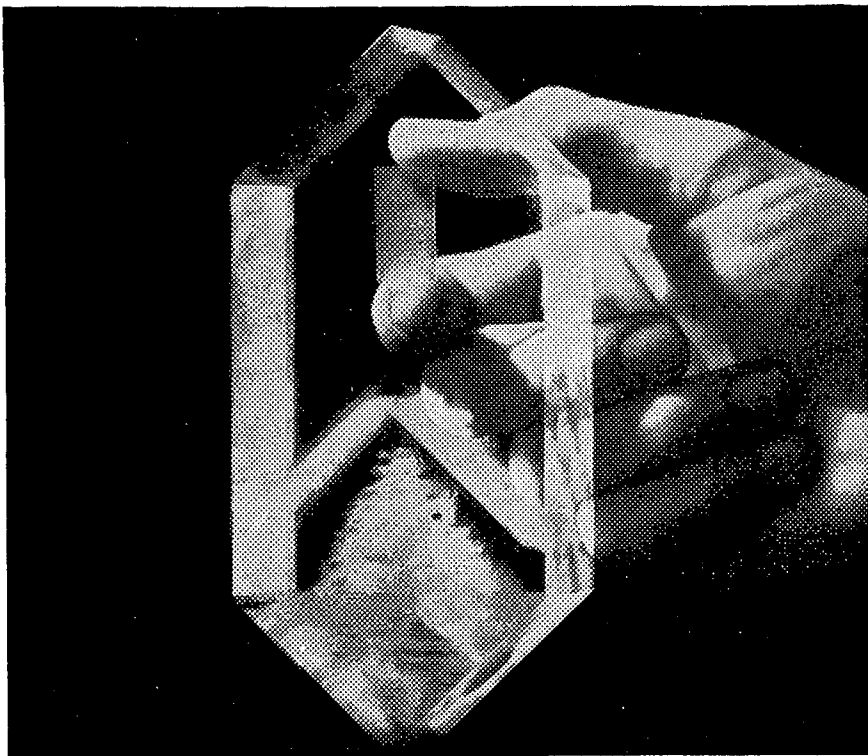
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THE OPEN FORUM

WILSON AND SOME OTHER PRESIDENTS

SIR: In Arthur S. Link's article, "The Enigma of Woodrow Wilson," appearing in the September *MERCURY*, the following statement is made:

"Americans had never before elected a scholar and teacher to the first office of the nation, and it is doubtful they will do so again, for the people never really loved Wilson as they had loved Jackson, Lincoln or the Roosevelts."

This sounds more like the logic of a ward politician than the logic of a Princeton history teacher!

I am fairly well acquainted with the biographies of our Presidents. Washington designated the territory upon which the United States Military Academy was founded. John Adams carefully supervised the education of his son, who was also to be President. John Quincy Adams. Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia. Ulysses Simpson Grant in his *Memoirs* says that while at West Point he aspired to become a mathematics instructor. James A. Garfield was principal of the Hiram Eclectic Institute, now Hiram College. Grover Cleveland became a lecturer at Princeton after leaving the White House, and Taft became a full professor at Yale after his tenure as President was over (but before he became Chief Justice).

Now not all these gentlemen were technically both "scholars *and* teachers." Some were just scholars, while others were just teachers. But, to take one example, the citizens who voted for Garfield would have vociferously denied that he was not both!

But Link's *ergo* — "and it is doubtful they will do so again, *for* the people never really loved Wilson" — gets me! Does Link maintain that a scholar and teacher is ipso facto devoid of popular attributes?

HENRY STONER

New London, Conn.

SIR: After reading "The Enigma of Woodrow Wilson" in the September *MERCURY*, I gave a mentally-delivered historical lecture for my own benefit, and for the benefit of those who care to read it here. . . .

What really did make Wilson such an enigma? Broadly speaking, the fact that he was not, in spite of being a scholar, the ruler-philosopher that the historical rôle called for; because, in spite of his idealism, sincerity and "universal democracy"



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attitude, he allowed himself and his country to be duped and flag-waved into the war by false propaganda from the side that was always convinced that . . . he couldn't be anything more or less than a good Tory in heart. . . .

Had Wilson insisted upon and made possible, by the power that he and America held in the final outcome of the struggle, the honorable peace that Germany wanted from France and England in 1916, the status quo could have been preserved in Europe for another fifty years. The Germans would have retained the Hohenzollerns, not have had any revolution, Versailles would never have been spawned, and Hitler would have died a poor house painter . . .

J. G. BROWN

Portsmouth, Va.

THE CASE AGAINST DOGS

SIR: After reading Mr. Sam M. Jones' attack, in the September "Open Forum," on the scientifically-minded Bergen Evans who writes "The Skeptics' Corner," I can agree with Mr. Jones on one point, viz: ". . . by and large they [dogs] compare favorably with people." Indeed, one may reasonably gather that Mr. Jones' great dane has a healthier attitude toward humans than his owner has. The trouble that humans have with dogs . . . springs primarily from a certain type of dog-keeper and "dog-defender."

"Neither a dog nor a horse will attack a person, unless they are mad or smell fear," writes Mr. Jones. Such a statement could be made only by a person who has had a limited and perhaps abnormal experience with dogs or with the truth. I myself have been viciously bitten by dogs at the very moment I was feeling kindly toward those dogs and eager to pet them. So have thousands of other people. Owners of such dogs might well be examined by a psychiatrist, an ethics authority or a police officer.

Three or four years ago an honest, but perhaps over-zealous, gentleman wrote an article for the *MERCURY* stating why he "hated" dogs. [See the January 1944 issue: "Why I Hate Dogs," by G. L. Wyndham.] *MERCURY* readers of those days will doubtless remember what a bunch of psychopaths, liars and murderers attacked that writer in these columns. It was incredible. I was about ready to send in my own view of that motley aggregation when the *MERCURY* had to close the discussion. As I recall, about 35 per cent of those "dog-defenders" were self-proclaimed, sadistic murderers. They just itched to get their nice clean hands on that writer so that they might have the gratification of cutting out his tongue,

(Continued on page 632)



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Robert Patterson
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Sec. of Treasury John Snyder
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Sen. Robert A. Taft
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James A. Farley

Some of the Interviewers

Ernest K. Lindley, *Newsweek*
Marquis Childs, *United Features*
Edgar Ansel Mower, *Press Alliance*
James Reston, *N. Y. Times*
Bert Andrews, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*
Lawrence E. Spivak, *The American Mercury*
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STALIN PLOTTED A SEPARATE PEACE

BY

DONALD B. SANDERS

WHILE the armies of the Allies were slowly moving toward victory, Nazi and Soviet agents were conducting secret negotiations which might have led to the conclusion of a separate peace between Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany. This, briefly, is the startling conclusion to be drawn from incontrovertible documents now in possession of the highest United States and British authorities.

The secret peace talks went on intermittently from January 1943 to May 1944 — almost to the eve of D-Day. At times it was the Germans who appeared most anxious to reach an understanding. At other times it

was the Soviet government. The Japanese were especially eager to see peace restored between their European Axis partner and their Far Eastern neighbor.

Negotiations for a separate peace short of surrender by one party presuppose, however, a balance of bargaining power; and that is why during the first eighteen months of the German-Russian war there was no basis for an agreement. Hitler held all the trumps. The German armies were advancing deep into Russia, occupying the Ukraine and the Caucasus, massacring and capturing entire Soviet divisions. Hitler and his General

DONALD B. SANDERS is the pseudonym of an American journalist and student of foreign affairs. This article is based partly on material published by the United States Prosecution for Axis Criminality and by the Navy Department, and partly on documents in the hands of government agencies in the U. S. which are as yet unpublished.

Staff firmly believed that their military machine would soon crush Russia.

But in the first months of 1943, there was a change in the military situation — and with it there appeared a new factor in the political constellation. In February 1943, the myth of Nazi invincibility was shattered when the Russians completed the annihilation of the German armies at Stalingrad. Meanwhile, in November 1942 American forces had landed in North Africa, and the British had decisively beaten Rommel's forces in the battle for Egypt. For the first time the Germans were losing initiative and momentum. The stage was set for an attempt at secret negotiations — and many elements in Germany were delighted with the possibility of terminating the war with Russia.

Just as Hitler's surprise pact with Stalin had thrown even his most trusted aides into confusion, so the attack on Russia twenty-one months later was accompanied by a wave of doubts and disapproval in high Nazi quarters. Reared in the Prussian tradition of the Schlieffen plan, with the bitter experience of the first World War behind them, the Reichswehr generals had acquiesced in the Hitler-Stalin pact only because it had supposedly eliminated the menace of a two-front war. "Knock out the enemy in the west before fighting Russia" — that had been the motto of the *Generalstab*. The invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, therefore, marked a

sharp reversal of German strategy.

The doubters in Germany sought means of disposing of one of their enemies at a time. Since England had turned down all offers for secret peace negotiations (they were sent through the Bishop of Chichester and the Vatican in 1942), these Germans started thinking increasingly in terms of an armistice with Russia — especially after the Casablanca Conference of January 1943, at which President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had pledged war until "unconditional surrender."

Besides several of the military, there were men in the German foreign service whom long years of association with Russia and the months of Nazi-Soviet "friendship" had convinced that war with Russia would be a grave mistake. This group included Count Fritz Werner von der Schulenburg, the prewar Ambassador to Moscow, a subtle and expert diplomat (who was later executed for his participation in the anti-Hitler plot of July 20, 1944); and Gustav Hilger, the former Councillor of the Moscow Embassy, a quiet and soft-spoken man who, born and reared in Russia, was considered Germany's top expert on the USSR, and who had been instrumental in bringing about the German-Soviet understanding in 1939. Indeed, the Foreign Minister himself, Joachim von Ribbentrop, stated as late as February 1945 that he could talk turkey much better with the Russians than with the British.

Finally, there were still several

minor policy-making officials in the *Auswärtiges Amt* who adhered to the old long-range goal of German policy: to cement the Old World through a network of alliances, whose main partners were to be Germany, Japan, Russia and Italy. They conceived of an impregnable Eurasian fortress, invincible to all attacks by the Anglo-American world.

But whatever their reasons and emotions, all these groups shared a common willingness to explore the possibility of a separate peace accord with the Russians.

II

Stalingrad also gave the Russians an excuse for being receptive to separate peace feelers. The Red Army had been regrouped and revitalized; industrial production in the rear began to operate more normally; the domestic situation was again under control; and Allied lend-lease was beginning to pour in more steadily and plentifully. Yet the complete liberation of Russia from the German invader was still only a dream. Russia had suffered millions of casualties in killed, wounded and prisoners of war. Her best agricultural regions and some of her key industrial centers were in enemy hands. The Allied landing in Western Europe was still in the planning stage.

When, therefore, the highest leaders of the Soviet Union sent out the first feelers for a separate peace with Germany in January 1943, these major considerations entered into their calculations: Stalin might be able

to stop the war and still retain control of the entire area under Soviet rule prior to June 22, 1941; and if he could obtain an armistice from Hitler and rehabilitate the devastated areas of Russia, he might once again sit by and profitably await the dénouement of the war of attrition between the fascist and capitalist powers.

But there was one other element in Stalin's considerations: his allies. He had been obliged to endorse the Atlantic Charter and subscribe to a variety of statements pledging national independence to all the peoples of the world. The Eastern European governments-in-exile in London and Washington were — with the active support of Britain and the United States — laying plans for the revival of the independence of their countries that did not accord with Soviet expansionist aims in Eastern Europe. Sooner or later Stalin would have to meet with his Anglo-American partners to thrash out the bases of post-war settlement, and he was determined to get what he wanted. Under such circumstances, he reasoned, the threat — or the mere rumor — of separate Soviet-German peace negotiations could be used as a sword of Damocles over the heads of the democratic statesmen. Stalin had no scruples about employing blackmail if it would materially advance his cause.

It was with these considerations in mind that the Soviet Commissariat of Foreign Affairs was instructed to dispatch a trustworthy agent to contact the Germans in neutral Stockholm.

Alexander M. Alexandrov, for many years Moscow's expert in Central European affairs, and a personal friend of Schulenburg's, was secretly sent to Sweden. Molotov was concerned lest the whole affair backfire — for one word broadcast about the negotiations by the Germans and the Soviets would have lost a great deal of the confidence of their western allies. Afraid to contact the German representatives directly, Alexandrov transmitted his terms through the Japanese naval attaché in Stockholm, who speedily communicated them to Berlin.

In essence, Stalin offered Hitler a suspension of hostilities on the basis of a German withdrawal to the demarcation line provided by the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreements of August-September 1939. The secret conventions then concluded had given Russia control of eastern Poland, most of the Baltic States and Bessarabia. Now Stalin was even willing to consider ceding part of the Baltic coast to Germany. In broad outline, however, he was prepared to compromise on the basis of the *status quo ante*, i.e., the Soviet borders of June 1941.

The Nazis demurred. Indeed, the key men around Hitler, notably Hermann Goering and Field Marshal Keitel, insisted that the military reversals on the eastern front were merely temporary, and that a concerted air attack and a spring offensive would restore the initiative to Germany. Alexandrov was told by the Japanese intermediaries in Stockholm to return home. He was assured that,

if at a later date the Reich wanted to act upon the Soviet feeler, the German reply would be transmitted promptly by the Japanese.

The Japanese were more than mere messengers. They were extremely eager for a German-Russian settlement. Germany's attack on Russia, coming as it did a few weeks after the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese agreement of April 1941 had thoroughly disoriented Tokyo's statesmen. Japan needed German engineers, aviation technicians, mining specialists, scientists, experts in the production of *ersatz* goods, as well as blueprints of machine tools, airplane engines and electronic equipment. But with Germany and Russia at war, none of these items could reach Nippon; the Germans were unable to spare anybody or anything.

Japan, therefore, continued to offer her good services for the termination of the Russo-German conflict. In October 1941 Domei, the official Japanese news agency, openly urged that "the Axis powers terminate the war with Russia to conserve German resources for an assault on Great Britain." Political commentators in Tokyo wishfully looked forward to a "state of non-aggression" between Moscow and Berlin, which would reopen the Trans-Siberian railroad as "a most important link between Japan and Germany."

The summer of 1943 failed to bring the victories Hitler had hoped for. Russia reoccupied the Caucasus and a good part of the Ukraine; the Allies

destroyed the *Afrika Korps*; Mussolini was overthrown; American troops were pouring into the Old World in increasing numbers. It was then that Hitler himself began to toy with the idea of a separate peace — but on conditions diametrically opposed to those offered by Moscow's agents a few months earlier. In a conference with his Chiefs of Staff on July 17 and 18, 1943, Hitler confided that Russia might accept Germany's peace offer if the Japanese struck a sudden blow in the Far East. The minutes of the meeting at this point read:

Russia is getting considerable supplies via the Far East. Therefore the question arises whether a threat by Japan that she will enter the war against Russia, will help to make the latter accept the German offer of an unannounced armistice on the Eastern front, to be kept secret from the Anglo-Saxons. Russia would continue to accept lend-lease materials. This political goal is worth *every* sacrifice.

Hitler thus aimed at more than a mere suspension of hostilities: the armistice with the Soviet Union was to go into effect without the Allies' knowledge. Britain and the United States would then continue to ship lend-lease supplies to Russia while Stalin would in effect have become a silent partner in Hitler's coalition.

He wanted to reduce Russia proper to a second-rate power which could never again challenge the superiority of the Reich and whose economy would be *gleichgeschaltet* with the European New Order. On such terms he was anxious to talk "peace."

III

This was the one moment when both sides were prepared to negotiate seriously. Before agreeing to meet with Churchill and Roosevelt, Stalin wanted to know what he could expect from Germany — just in case. Moscow let the Japanese intermediaries understand merely that the Riga-Dardanelles line would be an adequate basis for discussion, but when the Germans gave evidence of intense interest, the Russian offer was amplified in greater detail. This time the conditions were transmitted through a secret agent in Sofia. (Bulgaria was still at peace with Russia, though firmly in the German orbit.) Moscow chose to circumvent the Japanese, probably because it was now asking German support for Soviet postwar bases in the Far East, especially at Dairen and Port Arthur. The major stumbling block, however, was the Near Eastern question, which had done more to disrupt the Molotov-Ribbentrop talks in Berlin in November 1940 than anything else. Russia now was bold enough — and considered her military situation sufficiently good — to demand control of the Dardanelles and an outlet to the Persian Gulf at Kuwait or Qatar.

The Soviet authorities aware of the negotiations were hopeful. But Kaltenbrunner, the head of the RSHA, the German central security agency, was violently opposed to all efforts at conciliation with Russia, and Himmler still spoke of a fight to the finish

against Bolshevism. The Nazi SS had managed to eliminate many of the pro-Soviet career diplomats from the Foreign Office. For a time, Berlin was obviously uncertain how to reply. Serious disagreements had developed inside the ruling clique there.

These were the days in which the "Generals' opposition" began to take several serious steps to overthrow Hitler. There were a number of former army commanders in the "aristocratic underground" who favored agreement with Russia. But virtually all underground elements had adopted the slogan of "X Day first, then agreement with the Communists." ("X Day" referred to the overthrow of Hitler.)

While Germany thus hesitated, Moscow was determined to waste no time. The Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers was at hand. Stalin had to have a reply before the Teheran Conference, scheduled for November 1943. Stockholm, Sofia, the Japanese — the three best channels — had already been used. Now Moscow decided to resort to a novel medium of communication. Early in the war, the Soviets had sponsored the creation of a "Free Germany Committee," consisting of German prisoners of war in Russia, and including such notables as Count Heinrich von Einsiedel, Bismarck's great-grandson; General von Seydlitz; and the loser of Stalingrad, Field Marshal von Paulus. Largely a propaganda and indoctrination agency, the "Free Germany Committee" was now chosen to serve

another purpose. Six of its officers — all of noble extraction and with pre-war connections in the Reichswehr High Command — were dispatched by the Russians across the front lines with an ostensibly spontaneous offer to arrange an armistice. After adventures worthy of a Hollywood thriller, the six prisoner-envoys reached the German lines. They were promptly taken into custody, court-martialed and later executed as "traitors to the fatherland." One more endeavor to come to terms — or at least to feel out the enemy — had failed.

IV

This was the situation as the Big Three prepared to meet in person for the first time. President Roosevelt was well informed about the peace feelers, and persons then close to him have stated that he was seriously concerned about the possible success of the Berlin-Moscow pourparlers. Perhaps Soviet agents were instructed to magnify the prospects of such an agreement. At any rate, Roosevelt was sufficiently perturbed to discuss the issue at length with his trusted adviser, Harry Hopkins. The upshot of their talk was an article, which appeared in the *American Magazine* for October 1943, under the title, "We Can Win in 1945." Cautioning against over-optimism, Hopkins went on to discuss the rôle of Russia. Bluntly he declared: "If we lose her, I do not believe for a moment that we will lose the war, but I would change my prediction about the time of victory."

Thus Hopkins pursued a double aim. First, he sought to give a subtle hint that Russia might drop out of the war; in this respect the article missed its aim: few, if any, readers were aware of this implication. And second, through Hopkins, the President sought to minimize the impact of the veiled Soviet threat of separate peace by declaring that the western allies could win without Russia.

But no arguments could eliminate the reality of the menace of Stalin's blackmail. Persons in a position to know argue that this threat of a separate peace had a lot to do with President Roosevelt's willingness to concede Russia virtually all of Eastern Europe. Whether or not Roosevelt and Churchill acted wisely in so doing, only history will tell. But for Stalin, Roosevelt's word was better than a vague German promise and a precarious political maneuver. Stalin believed — and subsequent events bore him out — that Eastern Europe was now to be his. That was all Hitler could have promised him under the most favorable circumstances.

Now agreement with Germany was no longer as advantageous to the Soviet government as it would previously have been. Each passing month fortified the certainty of an Allied victory. The remaining members of the "Soviet-oriented" wing in the *Auswärtiges Amt* and in the General Staff were trying to arrange one last peace offer to Moscow — without Hitler's knowledge — through Stockholm and the Japanese, who were in-

creasingly dubious of the Germans' chances in the war. This was early in 1944. To the immense surprise of the Germans, the Soviet agents showed considerable interest. Within a few weeks' time, messages had been exchanged back and forth several times, ironing out differences. The proposed terms of an armistice were finally ready — all but three. It was these three issues that led to a breakdown of negotiations.

The first German demand which Russia was unwilling to accept was the Nazis' insistence on Russian oil and ore deliveries to the German army. This, however, seemed to be the least crucial of the outstanding issues, and, had the others been settled, the chances are that a compromise could have been struck on this one as well.

The other two points centered around the Ukraine. The German government itself was not fully agreed on this point. While the Schulendorf wing, which had this time won over both Ribbentrop and Bormann, favored a cessation of hostilities on the eastern front, Alfred Rosenberg, the "anti-Bolshevik crusader," and Hermann Goering, insisted on the establishment of a German-controlled Ukrainian state under the reactionary Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky, who then resided in Berlin. As forwarded to the Russians in Stockholm, this German counter-proposal expressed tentative consent to a Russian-dominated Eastern Europe, but insisted on a German territorial corridor through Slovakia and Eastern Poland, which

would link the Reich with the granaries of the Ukraine.

It appears that Hitler was swayed to consent to these negotiations by the argument that the armistice was a temporary expedient, necessary to destroy the Anglo-American forces preparing to land in Western Europe. But to be sure of victory, Hitler needed food. The German negotiators, therefore, informed the Russians that the Reich would never consent to an armistice unless it had assurances that Russia was going to supply the German armed forces with food. In particular, the Germans insisted on the channeling of the Ukraine's agricultural output into Germany under German supervision.

It was on these last two points that the Soviet agents were instructed not to compromise. The negotiations finally broke down only after having reached a point so promising that both Moscow and Berlin were already concerned with preparing public opinion for the expected agreement with the arch-enemy.

In his speech of November 8, 1943, Hitler referred to all his western enemies with his customary abusive language; even Italy and Norway were thus castigated. But there was not one word of invective directed against Russia — only a brief phrase in which Hitler boasted of having moved the Red Army farther from Berlin.

Moscow waited until after the Teheran Conference before making an analogous move.

In a manner reminiscent of the

famous *Pravda* dispatch of August 19, 1939, which had alleged that secret negotiations were being carried on between Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler — thus providing an excuse for the forthcoming Nazi-Soviet accord — *Pravda* now printed a similarly fictitious dispatch, datelined "Cairo, January 12, 1944." Referring to Greek and Yugoslav sources "deserving confidence," the mythical *Pravda* correspondent (later investigation revealed that there was none in Cairo) reported "a secret meeting between two leading English personages and Ribbentrop in a coastal city of the Pyrenean peninsula," presumably Lisbon.

The meeting, *Pravda* alleged, "had the aim of determining the conditions of a separate peace with Germany. It is presumed that the meeting was not without results."

This dispatch, issued in the Soviet press on January 17, 1944, was a straw in the wind for the western diplomats in Moscow. While assuring the Russian authorities of the utter absurdity of the report, American and British representatives were seriously perturbed that the "news item" might be meant to prepare the Russian public for a rapid Soviet armistice with Germany — as it was indeed intended to do. But Hitler, as we have seen, was still foolhardy enough to insist on special rights in the Ukraine and the Middle East, and on shipments of Russian raw materials.

Stalin could not afford to pay that high a price for an armistice at a time

when the Ukraine had, at a tremendous cost, been regained by the Red Army. He was confident that his forces could now drive ahead and re-occupy all the areas Hitler might have ceded to him — and more.

What other suggestions were made, on and off, between March and May, 1944, through Stockholm and Ankara, were bound to fail. There was no longer any reason why Stalin should seek to prop up the tottering Nazi empire when, only a few months hence, Russia would be the only great power on the Eurasian mainland. Early in April 1944 Stalin received final word from General Eisenhower that the Allied landing in Normandy would take place in the last days of

May or in the first days of June. The prospect of Soviet Russia dominating Europe after the defeat of Germany, competing only with a weak British Empire and a distant United States, was far more alluring than could have been any accord with Hitler.

The evidence indicates that Stalin had no scruples about a separate peace with Germany. He would have been willing to make it — on his terms and to his own advantage. If he failed to enter into such an accord, it was because he was getting more from his Allies than he could have won from his enemies. And, furthermore, Stalin hoped to save the legend of uncompromising Soviet and Communist opposition to fascism.

THE ANIMAL SEA

BY CHARLES EDWARD EATON

The tide bulge bursts on the rough shore.
As from the heart this color boils,
Bright again, passionate once more.
Piled high, a breaker rushes, roils
Far in, thinned to aquamarine:
The sea throbs like a swollen sense.
Against the rocky cliff I lean
To watch the loosest waves grow tense
And whip their force into the air,
Lashing the bank with heavy thud.
Then from the earth's deep tremor there,
I know compactness in the blood.

THIS IS THE ARAB

BY TED BERKMAN

THE delegate from Iraq rose from his seat and strode confidently down the aisle to the rostrum. Every eye in the spacious hall at Flushing Meadows was upon him. The United Nations' Special Session on Palestine was in full swing, and the star spokesman for the Arab Middle East — that vague vastness of burning blue skies, arid plains and dead civilizations — had the floor.

Fadel Jamali of Iraq, trim and impressive in a pin-striped gray business suit, began speaking in English. His voice was deep and pleasantly accented, his argument emphatic. Five "minimum words," he declared, must guide any UN committee investigating Palestine: "peace, justice, freedom, democracy, independence." Jamali cited President Truman's celebrated statement on aid to Greece: "It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."

"This statement is the very essence of traditional democracy," the Iraqi commented. "It behooves the

committee which we are going to appoint to see how this principle applies to Palestine."

Jamali's appeal to international morality was echoed by Faris El-Khouri, pink-cheeked, white-haired representative of Syria. El-Khouri asserted the "human rights" of the Palestine Arabs were at stake, and also their political rights. These were held so dear, he implied, not only by the Palestinians but by Arabs throughout the Middle East, that there might be an uncontrollable popular revolt unless Zionism were officially repudiated by the United Nations.

"All of you in democratic countries," he said solemnly, "know to what extent public feelings can be suppressed. There is evidence that the people of the Middle East may go beyond the power of their governments."

This theme — the passionate political convictions of the Arab masses, and their readiness to take up arms rather than surrender their ideals — was also developed by Charles Malik, hawknosed scholar from the Lebanon.

EDWARD O. (TED) BERKMAN broadcast regularly from the Middle East over the American Broadcasting Company network last year. Before becoming correspondent for ABC and the Overseas News Agency, he spent two years in the Arab world as a U. S. intelligence official.

An "independent democratic" Palestine, based on its present Arab majority and with no further Jewish immigration, must be created at once, he insisted; otherwise, the outrage done to the highly developed sense of justice of the Middle East millions might provoke a holocaust. In such a case his government would "entirely reserve its position."

The assembled delegates listened attentively. The Arab League spokesmen were poised, articulate, well-tailored; Hassan Pasha of Egypt, sauntering through the delegates' lounge in his sports jacket and slacks, looked fresh from a Westchester golf course. In fact, practically all the Arab delegates blended effortlessly into the Western scene; except for Emir Feisal of Saudi Arabia, an archaic figure in desert robes, they could have been dropped en masse onto the floor of the United States Senate and would have merged instantly into the sea of spectacles, mustaches and bald heads from Illinois, Nevada and New Hampshire.

And the Arab spokesmen had chosen good words — words that had strong associations with democratic tradition. Liberty, freedom, human rights: these were concepts deeply rooted in the history of England, France, and certainly the United States. Yet, listening to the sonorous phrases, I felt there was something wrong with the picture, something missing. Or was it *someone* who was missing?

And then I knew. It was Mo-

ammed. Nowhere at the UN General Assembly sessions, or at the committee meetings in between, was there any sign of Mohammed: the common man of the Middle East, the little guy who worked in the cotton fields of Egypt, sold newspapers on a Bagdad street corner, tugged his camel across the bleak Syrian desert or planted olive trees on the scrubby hills of the Holy Land. Mohammed, who in countless numbers carried the name of the prophet of Islam — and little else.

The UN delegates weren't getting so much as a glimpse of Mohammed. And if they did, if a shabby barefoot figure had shuffled past them in the lobby, they would probably have dismissed the matter as a mirage, or ordered a change in drinks. It's doubtful whether they would have seen any connection between the shy, ragged, underfed little man and the political firebrands of whose wrath the Arab orators had warned them.

Nor would Mohammed, for his part, have made much sense out of the proceedings. He would have been awed by the stately chambers, terrified by the twisting corridors, baffled and then bored by the endless speeches of the foreign Pashas. The cafeteria alone would have interested him. If someone had informed him that his "human rights" were being discussed, Mohammed would have registered blankness. Such abstractions do not exist in the peasant vocabulary. If his informant then managed to convey the idea in simple terms, Mohammed might have dared

a brief, small, ironic smile. Given time to think the matter over, and the assurance of a sympathetic audience, he might even have roared out loud. For, through all his years of slavery, poverty and illness, Mohammed has somehow managed to retain his sense of humor.

II

Mohammed does not merely dress differently from the Arab diplomats, eat differently, think differently; he lives in a completely different world. It is a world that vanished from Western Europe several centuries ago. From his medieval stockade, he looks out at foreigners, airplanes, medical clinics and the rulers of his own country through the mist of many decades.

Soon after arriving in the Middle East I had to attend a press conference at Arab League headquarters in Cairo. I had lost the address, so I phoned a friend, a young Syrian student.

No, Sabri had never been to the League, but he was sure we'd have no trouble finding it. Anybody in town would know. He'd get the directions in Arabic, and take me there.

It sounded plausible. In Washington, any passerby could direct a stranger to the Capitol.

Our first disappointment was with the cab driver. "*Al jamia arabeiyah*," Sabri said to him briskly. The driver turned around blankly. Sabri repeated, more slowly, the words for "Arab League."

"*Mish haraf*," the driver replied

very definitely; meaning, "I don't know."

Sabri tried to elucidate. The driver kept shaking his head.

"Well, it's got to be in mid-town somewhere," Sabri said to me. He gave the driver instructions. We cruised around for ten minutes, then Sabri decided we must be pretty close. We got out and walked up to a man who had been leaning against a high wall, watching us with dull curiosity. He was the perfect Mohammed, Cairo edition: wrapped in a long-sleeved, faded blue galabeah, the nightgown-like robe of the Arab world; a red imitation-leather fez atop his balding head; hand-me-down oversize black shoes poking out beneath the galabeah.

Sabri went to work on him. Where was the Arab League — the meeting-place of the great *Pashas*, the home of the mighty, the talking-hall of the Kings? He tried everything — and got nowhere. The man obviously had no idea what Sabri was talking about. He stared at us stolidly a moment, then shuffled away.

There, directly before us, on the white wall against which he had been leaning, we saw the bronze plaque with large lettering in French and Arabic: "The Arab League."

There was nothing surprising in this. Mohammed could hardly be expected to read Arabic, much less French, since his schooling was probably nil. As for knowing about the League as a matter of general information, his instinctive reasoning

would have been: What have I to do with the Arab League?

Mohammed has many guises — some pathetically wretched, some deceptively picturesque. He may cover his head with an artfully coiled turban, or with a plain white skull-cap; his feet may be slippered or bare. But underneath, he is a fixed, unchanging quality. And he comprises 85 per cent of the Arab world. Except for the landowning government officials, the small merchant class, and the desert Bedouins, who are concentrated mainly in Saudi Arabia, the Middle East is all Mohammed.

A few basic concepts dominate Mohammed's life. Foremost, and affecting all the others, is his religion. Islam teaches him that nothing changes or is changeable; that birth, death and the interlude between are all preordained and firmly controlled by Allah; that it is pointless, if not sinful, to challenge the existing state of affairs. Mohammed finds in the Koran, the Holy Book of Islam, frequent allusions to the poor as an element in society. For example, persons of means are enjoined to set aside regularly 2.5 per cent of their income for charity. By indirection, the permanent status of the poor is thus confirmed in Mohammed's mind; his miserable lot is enshrined in the Prophet's teachings.

This gives the Arab an extraordinary capacity for absorbing punishment. I have seen a Transjordan peasant, notified that for the second time he has lost a child at birth, shrug and

remark calmly: "It is Allah's will. I shall have others."

This fatalism has also, of course, dulled any impulse toward rebellion, thereby permitting the social structure of feudalism to harden in the Middle East while it was crumbling in Europe. Confident that Mohammed would not strike back, his landowning masters have flogged, cheated and starved him into submission.

Mohammed lives in one of three places: a big city, a country village, or a large estate as a sharecropper. (Huge holdings in the hands of absentee owners are a commonplace in countries like Egypt, where more than a third of all the land belongs to one half of one per cent of the population.) Mohammed prefers to live in the city, especially if he can land a place in the household of a foreigner. *Inglesi* and *Americani* are much less fussy about checking their food bills than are local employers, and are more generous with such items as used clothing. The city has other attractions: the possibility of learning some minor trade, the likelihood of adequate shelter against sun and cold, the availability of numerous cafés where Mohammed can relax over his long hubble-bubble pipe and of cheap restaurants where he can eat for a few cents a day.

III

When Mohammed joins the city sophisticates, three words come to symbolize his life: *maaleesh*, *bakshsheesh* and *imshi*.

Maaleesh resembles the Russian

mitchevo and the American “never mind,” but is more encompassing than either. It signifies a cosmic indifference. Mohammed will apply it equally to a radio tuned too loudly, or to the careless destruction of your favorite meerschaum. It can be maddening to a Westerner, particularly from the lips of a somnolent hawker who, confident in the protection of Allah, has just stepped in front of a U.S. Army car and been saved from death only by a herculean wrench of the wheel. Sooner or later, however, the Westerner finds himself yawning *maalesh* at an over-zealous colleague, and realizes he too is succumbing painlessly to the slow, dreamy tempo of the East.

Baksheesh is Turkish for “bribe” or “tip.” In the West, graft is incidental; in the Middle East, where \$300 a year is considered a very fancy income, *baksheesh* is a basic source of livelihood. I have seen grown men brawl over the piaster *baksheesh* involved in corraling a taxi; a piaster is worth four cents. *Baksheesh* is the whimpering plea of street beggars, the hopeful trill of barefoot urchins. No transaction is complete without it. Your cook considers it a legitimate part of his income. If you check too carefully on the outrageous sum he claims to have paid for oranges, he will calmly switch the jack-up to bananas. Even hospitals are not exempt; a patient who forgets his attendant will find water substituted for his insulin injections.

Imshi is as ugly as it sounds. It

means “scram, beat it,” but it also means something more. Natives use it only in addressing dogs. Occupation troops used it only in addressing natives. Most of the troops are gone now, but it will be some time before the sting of the British Tommy’s “*Imshi!*” is forgotten.

For this and similar reasons, Mohammed is not sorry to see the British forces go. But his joy is considerably tempered by a sober realization: with the departure of the Tommy and his free-spending ally, the American GI, there will be fewer jobs in the cities. Mohammed may be forced back into the death grip of the farm. This is a prospect before which even the habitual, all-embracing *maalesh* falters on his lips. For he knows that he will be exchanging the relative freedom of action and opportunity afforded by the city for the life of a landlocked galley slave.

The Arab *fellah* or peasant goes into the fields at sunrise. Using only his hands or the most primitive of agricultural equipment — a wooden plough, a pair of scrawny oxen — he toils in the blazing sun until evening. For these labors, he receives anywhere from 15 cents a day — the average in the date plantations of Iraq — up to the munificent wage of 30 cents daily, the all-time high achieved by cotton pickers during the wartime inflation in Egypt. The *fellah* who works his own farm fares little better. In Palestine, where, according to the Iraqi delegate to the UN, the people have “their natural rights and

their acquired rights," the per capita income of the Arab population in 1936 was \$68 annually. Nearly half of Palestine's two and a quarter million acres are owned by a small group of prominent families, like the Husseinis to which the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem belongs.

Of course, the *fellah* has practically no expenses. Only food and clothing for his family. And sometimes rent. Yet, he is always in debt.

If he works his own land, Mohammed generally needs a cash advance for seeds and other expenses at sowing time. He may borrow ten pounds — the equivalent of forty dollars. He'll pay back fifteen pounds in July — or he won't get his loan. If he needs funds to meet an emergency like a locust plague or a drowned donkey, the local landlord will be glad to oblige, at a nominal interest rate of five per cent monthly. Delay in payment places Mohammed's land in jeopardy.

The debtor's yoke fits even more snugly around the landless peasant's neck. Here Mohammed is hired out, like a horse or water buffalo (but more cheaply), to help harvest a cotton crop or to work the neglected fields of some comfortably distant landlord. To obtain a day's work, Mohammed must apply through a middleman contractor. It is no great problem for the contractor to withhold work from Mohammed for a week or two, force Mohammed to borrow from him, and then impose whatever future wages he pleases on the helpless *fellah*.

A stroll through an Arab country village is a sobering experience. The villagers live in windowless mud huts, either roofless or thatched with reeds. There are no sanitation facilities. Flies crawl through the garbage, into the rice bowls, over the faces of the children. Old women squat motionless before the dark, smelly doorways. The huts are virtually without furniture; straw mats serve as beds. Sometimes the dwelling is duplex: there is an upper section for the family, and a lower one for the cattle. Often the relative comfort of cattle and *fellah* is reversed; on one large estate that I visited, the cattle were housed in clean, wide stalls near the owner's mansion, with fresh air, regular groomings, and room to move around. The *fellaheen* were packed into a cluster of mud huts at the edge of a murky canal, living amid layers of filth and in cavernous gloom. Arab League oratory about "the rights of all peoples to justice, democracy and self-determination" — so high-sounding at the UN — would have echoed strangely in those squalid hovels.

IV

Mohammed's diet is on a par with his housing privileges: tea and flat, unleavened bread for breakfast; bread and a salted onion or tomato for lunch; soup or a vegetable mash for dinner, with black tea and more bread. Once a month Mohammed splurges on a slab of stringy meat for his family. Vitamin content is not a high priority consideration: the big

question is not *what* one will eat tonight, but *whether*.

This regimen does not leave Mohammed in very good physical condition. Arabs who struggle through the early years — one out of five dies in infancy in Transjordan — generally emerge with digestive ailments, eye diseases and other disorders. A Syrian doctor — one of the saddest men I ever met, and understandably — told me the average *fellah* probably has upwards of thirty diseases. He listed anemia, hookworm, tuberculosis and trachoma as the most common. These ailments go untreated. Middle East villages and country estates have no doctors, much less hospitals. The measure of governmental interest in the problem can be gauged by the experience of U. S. Army doctors who, during the war, offered to set up a typhus vaccine laboratory for the Egyptian authorities. The offer was ignored. Vaccine donated by the Americans to head off a threatened typhus epidemic found its way onto the black market, where the fashionable set of Cairo, which was least susceptible to the disease, bought it up at fabulous prices.

Crushed and handcuffed as Mohammed is, there is someone still more miserable: his wife. To the weary *fellah*, women exist mainly to take some of the physical burden from his sagging shoulders, and secondarily to satisfy his biological needs. An attractive village woman with capable hands will fetch a bit more on the market than a young donkey, al-

though not as much as a horse. Mohammed may take himself an extra wife or two if he thinks it's a good business investment. He can always discard a fractious mate by proclaiming "I divorce thee" three times.

This arrangement is helpful, as law courts might be confusing to the *fellah*. Four times out of five, Mohammed is illiterate. Few Arab villages have schools. Programs for rural education, where they exist at all, remain on paper.

But then, as long as Mohammed continues to be a two-legged beast of burden, he has little need for more words. His meager vocabulary is adequate to describe the components of his life: work, hunger and propagation. If Mohammed's horizons were expanded, "it might make him unhappy!" Such was the solemn explanation advanced to me by an Egyptian Senator in the lavish dining hall of Cairo's Royal Automobile Club.

"These people are little better than animals," the Senator explained. "If they came here, and saw these rich carpets and all this expensive food, they might not understand. They might be unhappy!"

This Senator had invited me to dinner to seek my help in getting tires from America for his Packard roadster — "the small car," as he had apologetically added. "After all," he had pointed out, "you can't expect me to ride the trolleys with these wretched vermin in the streets."

One of the battle-cries of the Arab delegates at the UN has been the "po-

litical rights" of the Palestinian Arabs. They assert it is unfair to deprive the Palestinian Arabs of home rule, which would give them all the political privileges enjoyed by their brothers in the independent neighboring countries of the Middle East.

Mohammed would be astonished to learn that he has political privileges. He votes from time to time, yes; but he votes according to the dictates of his landlord or his village mayor, one of whom is probably the candidate for the district. If he shows any tendency toward dissent — an unlikely development, since he has only the haziest notions about government, except to distrust it — he will be thoroughly manhandled on the way home.

In large cities, where the population cannot be so easily rounded up in lorries and rigidly controlled, there is a free-for-all scramble of *bakshesh* and intimidation, with sometimes extraordinary results: at a recent election in the Iraq port of Basra, each of two candidates received more ballots than the total number of voters registered.

Politically, Mohammed is at best a meaningless "vote" in a framed election; at worst, a potential dupe for demagoguery. He has little comprehension of the twentieth-century world, no background against which to sift the coffee-house rumors or the fanatic rallying cries of his "leaders." In April of 1946 I had a revealing chat with my Lebanese cook, a former *fellah* (and perhaps a *fellah* now

again). "Jews good people," he said in his telegraphic English. "Christians, Arabs, Jews all good. Some men bad; can be bad Christian, bad Arab, bad Jew. My uncle works for Jews in Palestine, in orange place. Makes *keteer felous* — much money. Jews good people."

Several weeks later we talked again. "Jews bad," he said suddenly. "Jews want take away Palestine from Arabs." He seized a chair to illustrate. "This my chair. Some man wants take it, I shoot him."

In the interim, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem had come back to the Middle East.

Mohammed, in his many millions, can be a great force for good or evil. At the moment, he is the creature of the men who rule him. They own the land he walks on, the rags on his back, the very thoughts in his head. But there are signs that he is stirring in his sleep. Contact with occupation troops; the spread of radios to village cafés; emergence of a vigorous and articulate student movement clamoring for reforms; and the visible achievements of Zionist colonization in Palestine: all these are beginning to pry open Mohammed's long-closed eyes. As Mr. Jamali of Iraq so eloquently proclaimed at Lake Success: "Some people have been in chains for fifty years. They should not be kept in chains for one hour more. It is the duty of the United Nations to see to it that freedom prevails and subjugation ends."

As one who has seen these people in chains, I can only agree.

THE CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT FEUD

BY ALSON J. SMITH

IN A Reformation Day address in St. Louis two years ago, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, then President of the Federal Council of Churches, stated solemnly that "serious tension is developing between Roman Catholics and Protestants in the United States." He laid the blame on Catholics. In a Fordham University Commencement address in June 1947, Cardinal Spellman also took cognizance of this growing friction. "Protestants," he said, "are waging a crusade of bigotry against the Roman Catholic Church," with "the *Christian Century* spearheading the attack." (In the period between the two addresses the *Century* had published a series of articles by Harold Fey entitled "Can Catholicism Win America?") Replying to the Cardinal's Fordham speech, the magazine's editor, Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, said sharply: "If Cardinal Spellman really wants an anti-Catholic fight he can have one."

There were other signs of a violent rupture in the surface wartime unity between the two dominant branches of Christendom in the United States. Nearly all the Protestant groups, from

the arch-conservative Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church to the arch-liberal Episcopal Church League for Industrial Democracy, were demanding an immediate end to Mr. Myron Taylor's mission to the Vatican. Their vociferous outcries drew from Cardinal Spellman, as spokesman for the American Catholic hierarchy, the charge that those who opposed the Taylor mission were "unhooded klansmen." The Methodist bishops countered by telling the Roman Catholic Church that it should "cease to misinform the American people by affirmations of loyalty to democratic ideals when deliberately denying religious freedom wherever it has power to do so." The official and unofficial presses of both sides began to belabor each other with such epithets as "fascist," "totalitarian," "anti-democratic," "Jesuitical," "libertarian" and "anti-God." Justice Jackson commented sadly that "never before in the history of the Supreme Court had so many cases been heard that had their origin in racial and religious difference."

Cardinal Spellman is mistaken in at least one respect. There are no Klansmen, hooded or unhooded, be-

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hind this new anti-Catholicism. Indeed, official Klan policy today is to soft-pedal anti-Catholicism while emphasizing its hatred of Communists, Jews, Negroes and the CIO. This new anti-Catholicism is significant precisely because it is *not* the traditional Pope-hating of the ignorant Protestant bigot, with its legends of guns cached in Catholic churches and its gamy rumors of the goings-on behind convent walls. It has bases which are emphatically anti-Klan.

This new opposition to Catholic activity is rooted in liberal Protestantism, and is led by such old enemies of Klan-type bigotry as the *Christian Century* and the *Churchman*. In 1928 these magazines were defending Al Smith and supporting the right of the New York governor or any other Catholic to run for the Presidency. Today they lead the Protestant attack on the Taylor appointment, on Federal aid for parochial schools and on the Catholic attitude toward planned parenthood. It was a Protestant of the intellectual and moral stature of Albert Levitt, former judge of the U. S. District Court of the Virgin Islands, and former special assistant to the Attorney General, who wrote recently to the Chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and stated that he was "willing to appear before your committee and present, under oath, so as to be subject to the pains and penalties of perjury, conclusive documentary proof that the Roman Catholic Church in the United States is engaged in subversive

activities which are undermining our American form of government and are designed to destroy the political and religious freedom of our people."

Allied with the official Protestant groups are such ultra-respectable organizations as the National Commission for the Defense of Democracy through Education, headed by Dr. Alonzo F. Myers of New York University, the National Council of Citizens on Church and State, sponsored by leading Protestant figures and high Masonic officials, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Archbishop Cushing of Boston admitted the serious nature of the opposition when, commenting on the new "wave of anti-Catholicism," he admitted that those responsible were not "crackpots or fanatics disavowed by their non-Catholic churches."

II

The general backdrop against which this developing conflict is set is modern Catholic history, which sees an unusually strong and able Pope on Peter's throne, engaged in what the Vatican considers a life-or-death struggle with "atheistic Communism." In this struggle the Papacy has already received some fearsome wounds. There are no longer any great, traditionally Catholic states left in the world. Poland, France, Italy and Spain, the historic sources of Catholic wealth, tradition and leadership, no longer count for much in world affairs. And paradoxically it is the traditionally Protestant powers — Great

Britain and the United States — upon which the Papacy must rely in its cold war with Communism. This has meant a great intensification of Catholic action in those predominantly Protestant lands — action which is designed to enlarge the size of Catholic minorities there and to strengthen Catholic political power.

Against this general backdrop — the shift in power in the world, the disintegration of Catholic Europe and the determination of the Papacy to strengthen Catholicism from new sources of power — we can consider the three reasons for the sudden sharpening of differences between Protestants and Catholics in America.

The first is the new Catholic drive among the Negro and rural sections of the population, both of which are as traditionally Protestant as Latin America, say, is traditionally Catholic. Protestants react as violently to Catholic activity designed to win Negro converts as Catholics do to Protestant activity in Latin America. It is looked upon as a form of poaching. There are 13 million Negro Americans, and only some 300,000 of them are Catholics. The Josephite Fathers are now training young Negro Catholics in large numbers for work among their own people at such institutions as Epiphany Apostolic College in Newburgh, New York. This disturbs Protestants.

American Protestants have a bad conscience on the Negro question, and so they disturb easily. Protestantism in the United States is still

tacitly supporting Jim Crow, even in the North, and the fact that Catholicism makes no racial distinctions, even in the South, appeals powerfully to the Negro American. While most of the Protestant denominations have, for the public record, issued stirring calls for equality and brotherhood, their lofty statements are usually quietly subverted on the working level by the Boards and Commissions of the various denominations. The writer's own Methodist Church, for instance, has led all of American Protestantism in its demands for social and political equality for all without regard to race, and no denomination has been more outspoken in its support of the Social Creed of the Churches, which provides for such equality. But in the July issue of an official publication called *Workshop*, which goes out to Methodist youth leaders, there is a "meditation," designed to be read to the accompaniment of organ music and an air of lofty endeavor, in which a Negro girl speaks to a white girl and says: "Why can't we be friends? Oh, in a social way, no. You live in your world and I live in mine; that's the only way it can be. But in a democratic [*sic*] way," etc. Thus, in spite of the splendid official pronouncements, Methodist young people in their most worshipful moments are still adroitly and officially propagandized for Jim Crow. And the American Negro, while his Protestant heritage is dear to him, is perfectly aware of this basic Protestant hypocrisy.

Catholics probably have a better record on Jim Crow, and their position was highlighted recently in an incident that attracted nation-wide attention. When a group of parents in St. Louis attempted to bar Negroes from parochial schools, they were warned by Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter that they would be liable to excommunication. He reminded them that a fundamental principle of the Catholic faith was the "equality of every soul" before Almighty God.

Back of the new Catholic emphasis on work in rural areas is the hierarchy's concern for the falling birth rate in the cities, where Catholicism is strong, and its realization that only in rural, Protestant America is the birth-rate rising. With immigration from Europe largely cut off, and with such immigration as there is weighted heavily against the Catholic population of the continent by our quota laws, the future is not too bright for an urbanized Catholicism. Four fifths of the Catholic population is concentrated in cities, chiefly in the northeastern United States.

In spite of this new Catholic missionary activity among Negroes and in rural areas, the fear of Protestants that the United States is becoming a Catholic country would appear to be unfounded. Catholic figures, which show 23,419,701 Church members, are misleading because they include all who were ever baptized as Catholics. The official Protestant figure of 41,943,104 members in the larger denominations would be around 50 mil-

lion if membership were computed on a similar basis. Moreover, the Protestant rate of increase for a 25-year period is slightly ahead of the Catholic rate — 23.8 per cent as against 23.3 per cent. Thus the ratio of Protestant numerical superiority over Catholics is slowly increasing, although most Protestants seem to think the opposite is true. The Catholic fear that the country is becoming increasingly secular is equally unfounded; in 1890 only 22.5 per cent of the population belonged to any church; today 52.5 per cent is church-affiliated.

III

A second and widely-argued source of cleavage is the Taylor appointment. Official Protestantism is solidly opposed to it, regarding it as a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution and a break with the traditional American principle of separation of church and state. The Catholic hierarchy as solidly supports the mission, and considers it a recognition of the temporal importance of the Papacy as well as a step in the direction of a just peace. It points out that this country was officially represented at the Vatican until the Italian revolution of 1870. The legal point is arguable, but that both Presidents Roosevelt and Truman had some doubts on this score is shown by the fact that both insisted that Mr. Taylor was their personal, unofficial representative in Vatican City and so kept argument about it out of Con-

gress and the courts. (In Rome, however, Mr. Taylor is accorded all the privileges of an ambassador.)

It is not very clear just what the Taylor mission has accomplished. The only announced goals which Mr. Taylor was reported as seeking from time to time — keeping Italy out of the war, preventing the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Japan, and obtaining a wartime statement from the Pope that fascism was worse than Communism — were not achieved. But in all probability the mission made some contribution to easing the plight of European refugees and displaced persons, and has provided the U. S. with a “listening post” behind enemy lines — although whatever he heard at this “listening post” Mr. Taylor has certainly kept to himself.

The most important issue between the faiths is in the field of education. The Supreme Court, in a five to four decision, recently ruled that the state of New Jersey had the right to furnish transportation at public expense to students at parochial schools. In their dissents, Justices Jackson and Rutledge clearly stated the Protestant position — that such transportation at public expense violates the Constitution and endangers the whole concept on which the American public school system is based.

All over the country Catholics and Protestants are battling over this issue — in the courts, in legislative halls and at the polls. In Wisconsin a refer-

endum which would have empowered the state to provide free transportation for parochial school children-lost by a narrow margin. In Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, the State Supreme Court upheld the directors of the Kennett Consolidated School who refused to provide bus transportation to parochial school children. In Oklahoma the House of Representatives turned down a proposal to furnish free text-books to parochial school children. The National Catholic Education Association has struck back with a resolution condemning “the educational theory that the public school is the only valid expression of American education,” and calling for a rejection of the view that public schools have a monopoly on tax funds. In Boston the Reverend William E. McManus of the National Catholic Welfare Conference said that Catholic educators will never permit the Federal government to treat parochial-school students as “step-children or second-class citizens,” and he called upon “all fair-minded public school teachers [to] repudiate decisively the malicious propaganda of the National Education Association glorifying public education as the only valid expression of American education.”

In the Cincinnati suburb of North College Hill the argument reached the fist-swinging stage. The Public School Board of North College Hill had three Catholic and two Protestant members. Under Ohio law a Board of Education may lease or rent property for a public school and hire any qual-

ified person to teach. The North College Hill board, over the protests of its Protestant members, leased the local Catholic parochial school from the Archdiocese and hired Catholic nuns to teach in it. No children changed schools and the parochial school continued exactly as it had before, except that now its bills and the salaries of the nuns were paid by the taxpayers. The taxpayers finally revolted against this state of affairs and elected a school board with a Protestant majority, which promptly fired the Superintendent of Schools who had collaborated with the old school board in leasing the parochial school. The new Superintendent, Dr. William A. Cook, had the blessing of the National Education Association.

However, more Catholics moved into the community and at a subsequent election the Catholics regained their three-to-two majority on the board. They promptly asked for the resignation of Dr. Cook, whereupon most of the teachers in the school system threatened to resign and some 700 school children went out on strike. The National Education Association investigated, blamed the Catholic majority on the board for the strike, demanded the retention of Dr. Cook, and, when the board did not immediately comply, blacklisted the school system. At this point a stormy public session of the school board was held at which the firing of Dr. Cook was confirmed, but before the meeting was over 29 teachers had resigned, accusing the majority of the

board of "religious bigotry." The two Catholic board members present were bruised and mauled by angry citizens who surged up on to the stage of the auditorium where the meeting was being held. The meeting broke up in a series of individual brawls between Protestants and Catholics, and when the Catholic members finally reached the safety of their homes many of them found their windows smashed. As a result of this incident all five members of the board resigned and the probate judge took over. He re-hired Dr. Cook for three years and did not renew the contract to keep the parochial school in the system.

IV

Meanwhile, no less than four bills aiming to make public funds available for "non-public, tax-exempt" (*i.e.*, parochial) schools were introduced into the eightieth Congress. They have yet to be acted on. S. 472, introduced by Senator Taft, provides that where states may legally spend state money for private schools they may also spend Federal money. H.R. 156, introduced by Representative Welch of California, authorizes appropriation of \$150-250 million not only to "local public school jurisdictions," but to "other state public education agencies and to non-profit education." H.R. 1762, introduced by Representative Whitten of Mississippi, provides for an annual Federal appropriation of \$50-300 million, with the use of the funds to be determined by state legislatures, and with sectarian schools

being considered "public" where legislators so decide. S. 199, introduced by Senator Aiken of Vermont, proposes granting \$60 million a year to private and parochial schools for transportation, health services, etc. All of these bills are supported by Catholics. Protestants, on the other hand, are strongly supporting a proposed Constitutional Amendment providing for absolute and explicit separation of church and state being introduced by Representative Joseph R. Bryson of South Carolina. The Protestants have a powerful ally in the National Education Association, 91 per cent of whose members oppose any public grants to private education.

Catholics, in supporting legislation designed to make public funds available to parochial schools, object to having to support two sets of schools. Protestants, in opposing such legislation, point to the Canon Law of the Catholic Church as proof that Catholics are opposed to the whole concept of free, public education. Section 1217 of the Canon Law states that "Catholic children shall not attend non-Catholic, indifferent schools that are mixed, that is to say, schools open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike." According to Canon Law, such schools are only to be tolerated where there is no alternative.

Behind all the frictions, of course, are the old, unresolved historic disagreements between Protestants and Catholics as to the nature and character of the church and its relation to the civil authority. Catholicism's

historic claims to primacy, restated with new vigor today ("as far as God's law is concerned, no one has a real right to accept any religion save the Catholic religion," said the Reverend F. J. Connell of Catholic University recently), sound arrogant to Protestants, while Protestantism's failure to bury historic differences and make common cause against Communism and secularism irritates and dismays Catholic authorities, who see themselves fighting the battle of Armageddon single-handed. To Catholic exhortations to get into the fight, Protestants retort that Catholicism fundamentally is as totalitarian as Communism.

In the midst of such vast and fundamental controversy, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Council Against Intolerance, and other inter-faith outfits seem as ineffective as Upton Sinclair's social worker in *The Jungle* — "standing on the brink of hell and throwing in snowballs to lower the temperature."

Because the issues are basic, and because they are not clearly and definitively resolved in American Constitutional law, they will continue to make for ill-will between Protestants and Catholics in this country. Religious friction, yesterday a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, is today a thunderhead of ominous proportions and tomorrow may produce a magnetic storm that will bring fundamental changes in our way of life. Meanwhile, no one seems to be paying much attention to the Sermon on the Mount.

PLAIN TALK ABOUT ROMANTIC LOVE

BY WAVERLEY ROOT

THESE United States comprise the area in which the institution of divorce has achieved its fullest flowering and its greatest respectability. This nation is also the one in which homage is paid, more incessantly and more blatantly than in any other nation, to romantic love. The two facts are not unconnected.

If divorces have doubled since 1940, if there is now one divorce to every three marriages, it is largely because the worship of the ideal of romantic love, in its most banal and pathetic forms, is widespread in our nation. We are submerged from birth in a bath of the most nauseating sentiment about love. The movies put it before our eyes, the crooners drive it into our ears, and our popular novelists tell us how it is supposed to work.

Love is the be-all and the end-all, the seventh heaven, the achievement of Nirvana, the ultimate goal. It offers perfect bliss, unalloyed happiness, contentment ineffable! Life can be beautiful when boy meets girl and the wedding bells chime them into a happiness that is everlasting.

The fact is that love is one of the major causes of unhappiness in America.

Is it any wonder that marriages break up when young people are lured into them by such absurd saccharine promises? They are led to expect the machine-made chromium-plated shiny new ecstasy of the pulps and the slicks and the Hollywood heaven. When they don't get it they decide they have been cheated. But hope remains. They can try again, just like the temporarily thwarted heroes and heroines of the movies and the magazines. By courtesy of the divorce courts they can try again to win that unalloyed happiness which the romanticists have assured them is the birthright of every good young American. No wonder that he (or she) is so easily dissatisfied, so ready to give up what has been achieved in an attempt to attain the unattainable.

No one has told these poor children that it *is* unattainable. The romanticists have lied to them.

It is time to tell them some harsh facts about love.

WAVERLEY ROOT contributed "Are the French Immoral?" to the June AMERICAN MERCURY and "Sex and the Double Standard" to the October issue. He is a veteran lecturer, radio commentator and foreign correspondent who has recently published three volumes of a projected Secret History of the War.

II

Some of the simplest illusions about love are the hardest to put down. Take for instance the theory, dear to romantic writers of a few years ago, that Providence, in its thoughtful way, has provided one ideal mate, and only one, for each person on this earth. One might think that, having taken so much care, Providence would at least see to it that each individual finds that destined mate. The evidence of life about us indicates that many people do not. If we accept the theory of the pairing off, by fate, of all the men and women of this world, we must conclude either that destiny is extremely inefficient in bringing these pairs together or that she takes a malicious pleasure in watching us engage in a damnably awkward game of hide-and-seek.

It is less fashionable today for writers to labor the one-man-for-one-woman theme, which has become somewhat threadbare. If you asked a young couple in love point-blank whether or not they believed that it had been divinely ordered that they should be brought together in the thrilling communion of ecstasy, they would no doubt deny any such belief; and intellectually they would not believe it. But emotionally they would, and it is the emotions that the individual acts upon, his dissenting intellect being limited to the rôle of figuring out after the fact some seemingly rational explanation. However disrespectful they may be in public to

the theory of the destined mate, few young couples have failed to look back upon the series of events which brought them together with a shudder at the realization that if it had not been for a whole series of lucky chances, they might never have met, or never have seen each other a second time, or never have had the opportunity to discover their love. If I had not gone to Cape Cod that summer instead of to Gloucester, Emily thinks, I would never have met Ralph. If I had not forgotten my hat and gone back for it, Ralph reminds himself, I would have left the party before Emily got there. And so, by recalling one lucky chance after another that kept their paths crossing until finally they ran parallel, Ralph and Emily convince themselves that some special fate was at work to prevent the awful doom of their failing to fall in love with each other.

What Ralph and Emily do not tell themselves (it would be most unromantic of them to do so) is that if this particular series of chances had not thrown them together, then Emily would have been led by some other concatenation of events to fix upon William, and Ralph to fix upon Cynthia. Whereupon each young lover would similarly retrace his narrow escapes from not meeting his beloved, and conclude with equal lack of reason that their guardian angels had brought them together and kept them together.

It would be possible, supposing we were in a sufficiently idiotic frame of

mind, to arrive similarly at the conclusion that a personal deity had undertaken to provide each of us with the one employer, the one doctor, the one laundress or the one laundry which, of all the potential employers, doctors, laundresses or laundries in the world, had been predestined for us. What series of chances led to the fact that you go now to the particular doctor who ministers to your ailments? The choice of the man who looks after your health is an important one. Yet you do not blanch at the thought that if Mrs. Johnson's nephew had not happened to meet Dr. Wilson at the country club, you would never have consulted him. You realize that if chance had not led you to your particular medicine man, it would have led you to some other. The point is that we have not swathed doctors in the romantic fog which envelops lovers. We do not believe that nature has ordained one doctor, and only one, to minister to each living individual. We should not believe either that she has selected one lover and only one for each of us.

That, indeed, is not nature's way. It would be inconsistent with all her known habits. Nature is prodigal. She throws new life into the world in such quantities that all cannot possibly survive. She uses a shotgun, not a rifle. She makes sure of hitting the target by showering it with a swarm of pellets instead of by aiming carefully with a single cartridge. She proceeds in the same way in the matter of love.

It is not necessary to find any one

man or woman for success in marriage. Within the reasonable limitations imposed by common interests, almost any pair of fairly decent young people should be able to get along if their heads are not filled with impossible ideas concerning a romantic love that never could be a reality. That fact has been demonstrated in the many societies, past and present, in which parents select their children's mates. Brides and grooms who have never seen each other before marriage are quite as successful in it as we who insist on doing our own picking.

The truth is that our young people do not blunder along unscathed until a beneficent fate confronts them with the one and only, whereupon they fall head over heels in love. On the contrary, when the time comes for them to fall in love, they fasten upon whatever is available. The passion comes first and an object for it is found thereafter. How unworthy an object will do is often clear to the friends of the stricken parties.

III

The current adulation of love is abetted assiduously by Hollywood. One of the queerest by-products of this worship may be observed in the standard method of presenting biographical stories of great men. Without exception, one discovers (with a certain amount of surprise), their achievements were due entirely to the encouragement provided by a loving woman, usually, Hollywood morals being what they are, a wife. In fact,

more often than not the genius is shown to have cribbed his ideas from his wife who, with patient self-abnegation, passes them on to him and stands admiringly in the background when he develops them as his own. The great men of Hollywood come off as rather poor sticks.

I have no doubt that it is true that some great men were aided in their achievements by the devotion of their wives. It is to be suspected, however, that in most cases that help was provided mainly by creating an atmosphere in which the men could work without distractions, rather than by prediscovering everything which was later to be produced triumphantly as his own by the husband. But it is also true that many great men have succeeded in spite of their wives. In fact, it is to be suspected that in the majority of cases masculine achievements have been attained, or at least assisted, by a talent for ignoring women, including wives. Women are often jealous, not only of other women, but of all male interests which attract attention away from themselves. Many women are jealous of their husbands' work, and resentful if it absorbs them too completely.

Thus, quite contrary to the Hollywood theory that love sparks genius, it is more often the truth that genius manages to manifest itself by minimizing love.

Love has long been touted as the most unselfish of the emotions. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The popular speech, which often demonstrates an unconscious wisdom that is not perceived by those who use it, has classified love more accurately in the maxim, "All's fair in love and war."

We feel no great admiration for advocates of war, often precisely because in its pursuit we throw justice, honor and decency to the winds. Why should we feel any greater admiration for those who preach or practice the theory that love conquers all, that love excuses all, that to gain one's objective in love, as in war, ruse, deception, hypocrisy and treachery are all permissible, that, in short, in matters of love all scruples may be thrown to the winds?

I suggest that the reason we condone the excesses of love is that all of us, at one time or another and in one way or another, have been smitten by the same madness, and to condemn the acts committed under the influence of love would be to condemn ourselves.

Madness, indeed, is exactly what we are confronted with in the case of love, and courts of law recognize the fact. They do not put it in precisely these terms, to be sure, for judges are caught up in the same romantic tradition as the rest of us, but the law acts in a fashion which presupposes the irresponsibility of persons under the impulse of love. Insanity is one defense against execution for the crime of murder, and in many countries the *crime passionel* similarly is rewarded either with an acquittal or a softer

sentence than can be understood on any other basis than the feeling that love and insanity are akin. The insane, though absolved of responsibility for crime, are commonly committed to asylums, their dementia being adjudged more or less permanent. The authors of crimes of love are usually more fortunate, the mis-called tender passion being usually temporary.

Insanity takes the form, often enough, of perfectly logical deduction and action based on a false premise. Love does the same. But the common tradition does not agree with the false premises of the insane. It does agree with the false premises of lovers. What does all our popular romantic fiction tell us if it is not that love is primarily a noble passion; that, consequently, whatever is done under its goad is excusable, if not always commendable; that, in short, all's fair in love and war?

Occasionally, there is an exceptionally revolting crime of love, one which horrifies us to such an extent that we inflict the extreme penalty on those who commit it — a rank injustice on the part of a society which provides the standard which the criminals only apply. Very recently the press has been filled with the sordid details of a crime in which two young persons were charged with killing the parents who opposed their love affair. It is with no wish to excuse such crimes that it is pointed out here that the society which is demanding an accounting from these individuals itself

subscribes to the basic philosophy behind their alleged acts. All's fair, etc. . . .

Is it an unselfish passion which, for its gratification, pushes those enthralled by it to murder and lesser crimes? It would be unreasonable to place on the other side of the scale the stories we hear of the sacrifices made for love, the "selfless" service given by lovers to the objects of their adoration. The acceptance of sacrifices is merely one way of gratifying a passion for another person. The service of love is by no means selfless; it is a means of self-indulgence. The example of selfless love cited most often is actually the most striking instance of our own theory — of the complete selfishness of love. We are referring here to mother love, deemed often to be sacrosanct, beyond attack or reproach. Yet the woman who imposes no restraints on her natural maternal affection is almost certain to endow her children with psychological disabilities which may very easily wreck their whole lives. Since the psychoanalysts began dissecting mother-love, its claims to unlimited respect have fallen off sadly.

For what is the ultimate objective of mother-love, as of sexual love? It is the complete possession of the object adored, which, since the object is also a human being, means the enslavement of that being. Jealousy is the concomitant of this objective, for it denies to the object of affection the right to any experience, any interest, any expression of self, which is not

shared and controlled by the lover. Love, in short, is, like most other manifestations of the human spirit, a good when it is kept within reasonable limits, an evil when it is permitted to exceed the bounds. Our misfortune is that we have too long been taught that in the case of love excess is not only permissible, but often admirable.

IV

Romantic literature is largely responsible for the plight we are in; and it would be my guess that a great deal of what we accept as true about love is utter nonsense, built up over a number of centuries by that literature. Its daydreams and wishful thinking must respond to a fairly universal human hunger, for not only has this fiction covered a considerable area in space and lasted over a considerable period of time, but it exists even where it bears no relation to everyday life. Oriental literature, for instance, provides examples of romances which have as their necessary points of departure the freedom of women to meet with men, even though some of them were composed in societies where no such freedom existed.

If love is not the romantic affair which the story-tellers picture, what is it?

It is, I would hazard, a malady of adolescence, as measles and chicken pox are maladies of childhood. You will object that love is a normal development, disease an abnormal one. To which I would answer, is it usual or unusual for an individual to escape

the children's ailments? Some do; but some persons also escape the pangs of love. Disease, you will continue, is an interruption of the natural state of things, love a necessary part of it. But is that true? Is not the function of children's diseases to build up in the system a greater immunity to infection and an ability to resist the attacks of disease? It might be desirable, indeed, if more lovers developed similarly, after their first attack, an immunity from later onslaughts of the same fever, as most, but not all, victims of measles develop immunity from renewed infection.

Surely a man of sense, looking back upon his loss of all sense of proportion during his first love affair, should be able to learn from it how to avoid making so complete an ass of himself the next time. For a man in his thirties to fall in love, in the romantic sense, would seem to me to indicate a state of arrested development, just as the failure to continue, for some time after the thirties, to experience the normal and natural sexual attraction for women which constitutes love in a quite different sense would indicate no development at all. It would certainly be less fatiguing for men who have been through the game if the tradition established by popular fiction did not require them, for the satisfaction of these natural desires, to act elaborately the rôle of the romantic lover which fiction-steeped women demand of them. Ultimately, boredom at the process or a distaste for its basic hypocrisy may decide them to

content themselves with lighter and, no doubt, less desirable loves. One recalls the very old Russian in Isak Dinesen's *The Old Chevalier*, who, when asked if he could have any illusions about the feelings toward him of the young dancers with whom he surrounded himself, answered: "I do not think, if my chef succeeds in making me a good omelette, that I bother much whether he loves me or not."

Thus the glamorizing of love ulti-

mately leads the mature man to cynicism about it. It is perhaps a better exit than is possible for those who refuse to be disillusioned. They flit from marriage to divorce to remarriage, endlessly seeking the promise of everlasting bliss, the elysium in which ecstasy is maintained endlessly, unfailingly, without diminution of ardor or sating of appetite. It does not exist; and it would be as boring as any other paradise if it did.

OLD PEOPLE IN ROCKING CHAIRS

BY DANIEL WEBSTER SMYTHE

On the clean front porch,
Forward and back,
The chairs run,
Each with a form
Hunched and prim,
Watching the sun.

O let the wooden
Rocker speak,
As the crickets whir,
Sing high, sing high:
Squeak, squeak!
And the wheel rolls.
The world is over,
But it hovers near
To these old souls;
For time has clutched
Each by the hand:
They have not many
Seasons to spare.
They watch and they wait
For Time to stop
The squeaking chair.

WHO ARE THE LIBERALS?

BY NORMAN THOMAS

NO WORD, not even Christianity or socialism, is used to cover a greater or more contradictory variety of thought and action than liberalism. Probably a Gallup poll would show that to most Americans liberalism means something between conservatism and radicalism, a kind of middle-of-the-road, there's good-on-both-sides position. During the war years it came to stand for a vehement anti-fascism. Most Communists and fellow-travelers called themselves "liberals."

In the political sense of the word, a British Liberal does in fact occupy a position somewhere between Labor socialism and Conservatism. In Canada, however, the Liberal party attracts those French-Canadians who are conservative in their social thinking. In New York state a member of the Liberal Party has, until now, been a man who wants to vote for the same candidates as those nominated by the Democrats and the American Labor Party, but who does not want to incur the taint of Tammany Hall or Com-

munist. In the national field, the two "liberal" outfits, the PCA and the ADA, each declare their own liberalism and their suspicions of the other's brand. And there are "liberals" suspicious of both.

In recent years those Americans who most stridently proclaimed their liberalism were usually the most vociferous preachers of a peace of vengeance against Germany and Japan. They were loudest in urging that there be no peace with Japan until the Emperor had surrendered himself to the kind of justice embodied in the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials. They were the chief supporters of the Morgenthau plan and similar cruelties and follies. They were far better able to discover seditionists at home than the FBI, and far surer than the Supreme Court that foolish speech constituted sedition. A great many of them had standards of decent conduct by which they condemned all Germans and Japanese for the crimes of their nations, but which did not lead them to condemn the dictator-

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ships of Communist countries that had committed the same sort of crimes. More recently that great "liberal," Henry Wallace, has been able to discover in the most absolute dictatorship in the world, the Russian, a "directed democracy" not to be judged at all as he once judged Hitler's, or as he now judges Anglo-American imperialism.

That contradiction in terms, the "totalitarian liberal" was — no, still is — one of the most ominous phenomena of our time. The Hearst press or the *Daily Worker* might sit at the feet of some of these totalitarian liberals to learn the smear technique, a fact which John Flynn has documented in pamphlets which have never been answered. Other features of my description of this kind of liberal can be established by a careful study of the files of, let us say, *PM*, or to a somewhat less extent of the *Nation* or the *New Republic*. About the only virtue these totalitarian liberals have in common with true liberals is opposition to race discrimination.

Historically, the words "liberal" and "liberalism" were first used to describe an attitude toward life and the solution of social problems, rather than a precise and rigid creed. The liberal was a man who was free from rigid orthodoxies and blind devotion to any doctrine. He had faith in his own reason and in the reason of others. When it came to the business of working out a program, he did not believe in any person or any class as a Messiah. His faith in the people was

not romantic, but he accepted Lincoln's conclusion that at least you couldn't fool all the people all the time. Faith in civil liberties and the necessity of preserving them lay at the heart of the liberal creed. In this sense of the word, the liberal is a man who would be horrified at any kind of totalitarianism, or at any demagogic attempt to win and maintain power by playing on mob psychology. It is the method of fascism and Communism more than the economic content of their programs to which the true liberal must object. And he objects most of all when that method is used by those who call themselves liberals.

Liberalism today is a poor word for a platform, and it is a rather interesting fact that the makers of political and economic programs in America have rarely called themselves liberals. In a recent article in *Harper's* magazine, entitled "The Lost Liberals," John Fischer makes a brilliant analysis of their plight. He concludes that the chief trouble is that the old set of ideas has been pretty well used up. As a matter of historic fact, the ideas to which he refers were not initiated as liberal ideas or advanced by men who called themselves liberals. All of them came from groups which called themselves Socialist, Populist or Progressive. And that is a fact of some importance to one who would understand the meaning and limitations of what is called liberalism in America. Mr. Fischer himself by no means furthers the cause of a new liberalism by his

constructive suggestions. He is far better able to tell liberals why they are lost than to show them a road worth finding.

II

We should get farther in straight thinking if "liberal" should be used in America as a term to denote a method and an attitude toward life and politics rather than a party or a detailed program. In a world in which so many reformers and revolutionists are tempted to try to fool or bully the people on the road toward their Utopia, we need more old-fashioned liberalism and more old-fashioned liberals, who are concerned for the methods which alone are consistent with a healthy democracy.

In my judgment, the higher values of liberalism can only be achieved in our present-day world under the banner and the program of democratic socialism. I should rather call what I believe by that name than try to make democratic socialism synonymous with liberalism. In short, I am not anxious to repeat as a program for liberalism what I discussed in the April 1943 AMERICAN MERCURY as a democratic socialist program.

Nevertheless, there are certain elements of a program which ought to be common to genuine liberals, whether they form a political party or remain scattered in various parties. The basic test for a liberal must be his support of civil liberties. The most conspicuous violations of civil liberty in America in World War II were: (a)

the wholesale evacuation of the Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the West Coast; and (b) the degradation of so-called alternative service for conscientious objectors, who were made to work under military direction at tasks of secondary social value *entirely at their own or their friends' expense*. This was slavery or involuntary servitude, in however mild a form.

The evacuation of Japanese-Americans was a characteristically totalitarian performance, in which an extraordinarily dangerous precedent was established for the subordination of individual rights to an arbitrary and hysterical concept of public necessity. The pages of the *Congressional Record*, as well as *PM* and other liberal papers, are my witness that, with few exceptions, those who boasted most of their liberalism either actively supported the government's conduct in these matters or were silent about it. It was a conservative like Senator Taft who spoke out most openly concerning various aspects of conscription and the treatment of the Japanese-Americans.

Liberals also very generally supported the ill-advised attempt to convict under conspiracy charges a variegated lot of opponents of the war, most of them crackpots and anti-Semites. If the attempt had not totally broken down a dangerous precedent might have been set in the whole concept of conspiracy, proved only by similarity of opinions. The liberal of the future, if liberalism is to count, must not repeat these errors.

Liberal is obviously not synonymous with pacifist, but the liberal must be keenly aware how peculiarly war is the enemy of liberalism. Liberals should hesitate about endorsing any form of universal military conscription in peacetime. Moreover, universal military training is a type of conscription opposed, as the Civil Liberties Union has said, to basic individual liberty. It is not fairly to be compared to compulsory education. It is to be justified, if at all, only by far more overwhelming proof than has yet been offered that it will make an indispensable contribution to national security.

Preservation of the liberties inherent in the Bill of Rights will not be the sole concern of the liberal. He knows that private monopolistic control of the means of communication is a practical denial of an essential freedom. He knows, too, that economic questions are of grave importance to democracy. Liberty is not something which men can eat, and hungry folks do not make good citizens for a democracy. On some questions genuine liberals cannot be on different sides of the fence.

To illustrate this point from recent legislation, no true liberal could approve of the measure, enacted last August, to raise the wool tariff by 50 per cent. This clearly was class legislation, for the benefit of a small group of persons, and at the expense, not only of consumers in general, but of fair trade with friends of ours like the Australians and New Zealanders. It is

an expression of an economic policy that has helped to breed wars. In my opinion, the liberal also would be hard put to it to justify the Taft-Hartley labor act. But his opposition, if he were a genuine liberal, would be in terms of a reasonable analysis of the adverse effects of the act, rather than vehement denunciation of it as a "slave" measure. The law, I fear, will do far more harm than good, but it does not bar unions or establish slavery. Labor unions are a basic form of association which have a right to exist on other terms than the grace of the political state. They have, however, no more right than any other corporation or association to complete freedom from social control in the interests of their relations to other groups and in justice to their own members. Once labor unions accepted the benefits of the Wagner Act they admitted certain regulatory functions of the political state. The issue at stake now is the kind and extent of the regulation.

III

What I have been saying leads directly into the question of the nature and function, in modern times, of the national state. It is a field in which liberals have done far too little constructive thinking. The range of liberal speech and action today is wide enough to include the totalitarian liberalism which I have already criticized and an anti-statism which borders on anarchy. About the only common denominator among liberals is

anti-racism and a wholesome repudiation of the mischievous doctrine of absolute national sovereignty.

It is easy to agree with the anti-statists that worship of the state as God is the most terrible of man's idolatries. In any proper social organization the state should exist for men and not men for the state. The state has no metaphysical sanctions of a higher order than the sanctions which, in their proper sphere, support the right of many forms of human association and organization — the family, the church, the labor union and the cooperative, to cite some of the most basic.

On the other hand, for the proper control of social relations we need some inclusive form of association or organization to which must be committed coercive power for the protection of the common good. Slowly men are coming to accept the idea that peace depends upon the organization of one world under one government with limited but nevertheless effective power. So true is this that there are some anti-statists who, rather illogically, believe in world government. By no means all abuses of power in the political state arise from the fact that it is national rather than global in scope. Neither is there any reason to believe that a mere change in the name of the state — for example, to commonwealth; or in its structure — for example, to syndicalist, would automatically protect men against the power that corrupts.

History affords plenty of illustra-

tions that voluntary associations, like religious communist colonies, tend to become totalitarian so far as the relation of the group, or rather the group leaders, to the rank and file members are concerned.

The complicated business of living together in an interdependent world cannot be left entirely to adjustments between voluntary associations. The beauty of some of these associations, for example, consumers' cooperatives or labor unions, lies precisely in the fact that they are not called upon to do what the inclusive state must do in preserving order.

Able-bodied adults are of necessity all consumers; all of them ought to be workers of some sort. Their interests as consumers and producers are not absolutely identical nor are they easily adjusted by the individual to his own satisfaction. It would therefore be a very grave mistake to base the state or any substitute for the state on a theory like "all power to the workers," or "all power to the consumers." Improvement in the quality of government will depend in a large degree on improvements in the functional representation of men's interests.

In this improvement of the quality of the state the modern liberal can no longer fall back on the comfortable theory which in Jefferson's time had a qualified validity; namely, that "that government is best which governs least." In economics the system of *laissez faire* is dead, past the power or the desire of even a Hayek to call

it back to life. Liberals may differ in their economic programs, but if they ever take the position in this age of advanced technology that liberty and economic security are incompatible, and that economic security is not the legitimate concern of government, they will in that very act condemn not only liberalism, but liberty itself in the mind of the masses.

The right sort of economic planning is today a necessity — a fact which men may admit who cannot yet agree on just what the right sort of planning is. Neither in economics nor politics is planning incompatible with democratic control. It requires the state as

the powerful servant but **not** the arbitrary master of men. To the degree that it can remove the tyranny of bitter poverty and unemployment it will serve the cause of liberty. The tree of liberty will reach its fairest growth in the soil of economic equality.

Here is a great field for further exploration by liberal thinkers. Perhaps they may arrive at conclusions which will make *liberal* an adequately descriptive name for a political party. In any case, the liberal attitude as I have defined it is our one hope of managing the business of living together without totalitarianism or war.

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

BY SJANNA SOLUM

Nothing is lost that ever was:
The mind retains each act beyond
Its birth and death. The stones that cause
Concentric circles on a pond
May sink forgotten, insensate, and
Unconscious of the flinging hand;
Yet still the circles ripple wide,
And wider still, until the mind
Perceives much more than was implied
By the initial act outlined.

Remembering, the heart may own
A stir from some forgotten stone!

THE SKEPTICS' CORNER

by BERGEN EVANS



*That a store cannot refuse to sell
any article that it exhibits for
sale¹*

During the war when the counters did not always carry what the windows displayed and when choice merchandise was frequently reserved for favored customers, many a shopper stormed out angrily threatening to invoke the law. But such threats left the merchants unmoved. They knew quite well that there is no law to compel a man to sell his displays.

Pseudosupercentenarians

There is an old gag about a fortune teller who made a mother happy by assuring her that her infant son would be a famous man if he lived long enough. When the mother eagerly asked, "What will he be famous for?" the fortune teller said, "For having lived so long."

The desire for fame is strong. Most

old people have no other distinction than their age and it is not surprising that quite a few of them attempt to be interesting by adding extra years or decades. The more imaginative throw in a few significant feats or gather reflected glory by connecting themselves with some historical figure. George Washington's old nurse kept dying in the papers throughout the late nineteenth century and Barnum just as assiduously kept resurrecting her. Zaro Agha, the old Turkish fraud who visited America in the early thirties, was able, after a little prompting from his press-agent, to recollect Napoleon distinctly. Scarcely a GAR veteran alive who didn't hear the Gettysburg Address delivered.

Most famous of these pseudosupercentenarians was Thomas Parr who professed to be 153 at the time of his death and claimed to have threshed corn when he was 130. When he was 105, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "his vigor was so far in excess of his discretion that he was constrained to do penance in the church of Alderbury for having be-

¹ On all matters relating to the law the author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Professor Fred Inbau of the Northwestern University School of Law. Professor Inbau is, however, in no way responsible for any errors that may occur. Those are the author's own.

gotten a bastard child." He was brought up to London in 1635 as a curiosity by the earl of Arundel and there overate himself and died. He was buried in the south transept of Westminster Abbey, not far, fittingly enough, from the poet's corner, with an inscription which attests many, though not all, of his alleged accomplishments.

Dr. Maurice Ernest, an English physician who has given 40 years to an investigation of the subject, is inclined to doubt most claims of longevity exceeding, or even reaching, 100. It is his opinion, which he documents thoroughly in the *Leader Magazine* (summarized in the August 1947 *Science Digest*), that "there is no proof to show that any member of any animal species has ever reached 114." The authentic record, he believes, is held by Pierre Joubert, of Quebec (113 years, 100 days), with the Honorable Katherine Plunkett, of Ireland (111 years, 327 days), as runner-up.

In estimating these tales we must remember that they were not, as we would say, numerically minded in the past. The Parliament of 1371, for example, levied a tax based on the assumption that there were 50,000 parishes in England. There were 8600.

That menthol "clears the head"

Menthol irritates the mucous membranes and hence makes them more sensitive to the air passing over them. But instead of "opening" the nasal passageways it seems to narrow them

even more. Dr. Noah Fabricant in his book *The Common Cold* says: "Menthol has no therapeutic value but appears to possess the quality of making the nose feel cooler. . . . The sensation of an open and clear nasal passageway is more psychological than real." Other otolaryngologists agree.

An irrelevant consideration

On August 24, 1947, the Reverend Mr. Gordon Miller, of the Free Church of God, Summerville, Georgia, mixed what was later described as a "salvation cocktail," containing equal parts of strychnine and bichloride of mercury with a dash of cyanide. This he then offered to one of his flock, Mr. Ernest Davis, to test the assurance of Mark 16:18. that if true believers "drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them." Mr. Davis, strong in the faith and seeking to bear witness, quaffed the cup, spent the next day praying and playing his guitar, and died in acute discomfort towards sundown.

In due time a jury of the Reverend Mr. Miller's peers will be asked to decide the wholly irrelevant question of whether or not he was guilty of manslaughter; whereas the question they ought to consider is, was Mr. Davis lacking in faith or is Mark 16:18 lacking in efficacy? Though of course there remains a third possibility, that, as a reward for his trust, Mr. Davis was translated — promoted, as it were, from the guitar to the harp.

When he is exonerated Mr. Miller

should apply for a grant in aid from the Department of Metaphysical Research at Duke University.

That Mussolini made the trains run on time

This is a modern myth of universal currency and considerable danger. In its essence it is pro-fascist and if, as seems likely, we have increasing labor troubles, we are likely to hear it more and more. It implies that, whatever minor inconveniences the fascist régime may have caused the Italians, it at least brought some sort of social order.

The account is now completed and there can be no doubt that the fascist economy was never sound. Mussolini's posturings have reduced the Italian people to beggary for generations.

And the trains did *not* run on time. The author of this column was employed in the summer of 1930, Mussolini's heyday, as a courier for the Franco-Belgique Tours Company and is willing to make an affidavit to the effect that many of the Italian trains upon which he travelled were not on schedule. There must be thousands of other people who can support this attestation. It's a trifle. But it's worth nailing down.

Callous Indifference

The claim that Americans are quick to further progress, while justified in the main, is not always borne out by their actions. Thus the Police Department

of Centralia, Illinois, under the far-seeing guidance of their Chief, Mr. O. T. Bounds, recently established a Bureau of Missing Dogs. Identification cards were printed whereon the dog's name, the color of his eyes, identifying scars, his picture, the print of his right paw and the names of two acquaintances who could identify him might be recorded. But "the public seemed to take only a small interest in the setup," the Chief writes, and the project had to be abandoned for lack of the necessary popular support.

That a drowning man sees his whole life pass before him

This belief furnished the whole tedious mechanism of Noel Coward's otherwise good movie *In Which We Serve*. As a group of men whose ship has been torpedoed cling to a raft there are individual biographical flashbacks, each introduced by a watery blur as the subject of the biography goes under. Lowell Thomas, after talking with several (undrowned) lifeguards asserts that the belief is true and adds that "music seems to come at the end. Not an unpleasant way to die."

Whether an orchestrated old home week provides a pleasant exit is a matter of choice. All memories are not pleasant. And there have been a number of people who have almost drowned who have insisted that they did not have any such recollections. An RAF flyer, Richard Hilary, who fell by parachute into the North Sea

records (*Falling Through Space*, 1941) that he merely thought "gloomily of the Squadron returning, of my mother at home, and of the few people who would miss me." Hilary, however, may not be a reliable witness because (a) he did not drown and (b) he is avowedly skeptical. He adds that floating in the water he was "enormously gratified" to find that, face to face with death, he had no inclination to pray: "It is an old jibe of God-fearing people that the irreligious always change their tune when about to die: I was pleased to think that I was proving them wrong."

That written contracts are more binding than verbal contracts

Outside of a certain restricted class of agreements, a verbal contract is just as binding as a written contract. An oral agreement, of course, is more difficult to establish in court if one of the parties fails to live up to it.

That a man has the right to shoot trespassers

A strong-willed farmer whose land at one point juts into the Northbrook Country Club near Chicago is convinced that it is not only his privilege but his duty to shoot any golfer rash enough to attempt to retrieve a ball that has sliced over the fence. That he is not just kidding is attested by the fact that in a frantic effort to draw his gun he on one occasion shot himself in the leg, and his presence, lurking

armed in the bushes, has come to be recognized as a definite psychological hazard of the third and fourteenth fairways, to be duly allowed for in estimating par.

His conviction is shared by thousands of other landholders who are genuinely convinced that a trespass constitutes a felony and one of so heinous a nature that its commission automatically suspends the constitution, denies the perpetrator all civil rights and confers upon the landholder the solemn duties of judge and executioner.

The knowledge that this is a fallacy will, no doubt, offer only cold comfort to any trespasser so unfortunate as to be shot. But a fallacy it is. As a matter of fact you can't even be sued for trespassing unless you have inflicted damage, though most courts assume that some damage, however slight, is inseparable from a trespass.

That crime doesn't pay

If crime doesn't pay a large number of young men and women are being deluded by the newspaper accounts of the luxury in which gangsters presumably live. Let a mobster be shot in a bungalow and it becomes a "palatial residence." If there's a fence it is an "estate." If there aren't pushcarts in the street it will be an "exclusive neighborhood." Their molls are always sultry, their cars bullet-proof and their bondsmen prompt. Something seems to have paid.

More men seek fame than money

and here, there can be no question, crime pays. Let those attest who jostled to dip handkerchiefs in Dillinger's blood or the hushed voices of the announcers interrupting Chicago's radio programs to state in solemn tones, "Al Capone is dead."

That the higher the voltage the more lethal the shock

H. A. Poehler, a Westinghouse engineer, writing in *Electronics*, says that the common awe of high voltages is unjustified. The stronger the shock, indeed, the *better* the chance of surviving it. Shocks of 40,000 volts or over produce only one-third the fatalities, proportionately, that shocks of lower voltage produce. The electric chair uses moderate voltage and current. The most dangerous possible shock is that from an ordinary 60-cycle A.C. house circuit when received by someone with wet hands or feet.

His explanation is that of the various ways in which electricity can cause death, the most dangerous is by interrupting the regular rhythm of the heart and this is more likely to be done by the low and moderate voltages. The high voltages will often throw the victim clear by the force of their shock.

That incest is "unnatural"

That incest is "immoral" in those groups that disapprove of it stands by definition but that it is contrary to the order of nature has yet to be demon-

strated and there is much evidence against it. Pliny tells of a horse that committed suicide on discovering that it had unwittingly been guilty of a consanguineous union, but its repugnance is not shared by most other blooded stallions. The "morals" of animals in the wild state are perforce largely a matter of conjecture but it is certain that whole countries have been overrun by a certain species in consequence of the introduction of a single pair, a performance that could not have taken place without close inbreeding and which, at the same time, bespeaks the vigor of the stock produced.

This last is important because those who regard incest as unnatural insist, as evidence of their allegation, that the offspring of incestuous unions are usually physically or mentally deficient. There have been many societies in which the ruling family was propagated for generations by brother and sister marriages. Among the Bedawi, Doughty tells us, the marriage of cousins was "invariable"; yet he found them a hardy race. Popenoe, writing in the *Journal of Heredity*, says that at Smith's Island, off the coast of Maryland, all seven hundred of the inhabitants are said to be related. He quotes a physician who lived among them for three years to the effect that there was not "a single case of idiocy, insanity, epilepsy or congenital deafness" among them. Similar reports have been made of the inhabitants of Pitcairn's island who are also, of necessity, all interrelated.

CONNECTICUT

BY TIM TAYLOR

BILL REDFIELD of Cromwell hitched his mare to a buggy and went off in search of a tornado. He never overtook the twister but when he returned to his Connecticut farm he knew more about cyclonic disturbances than any man alive, and today, more than 115 years later, interested parties still consult the statistics compiled by the inquisitive Yankee.

This inquisitiveness, this restlessness that sent Bill Redfield scurrying about the countryside in hot pursuit of a tornado is not unusual among Connecticut folk; in fact, it's commonplace. The bear "that went over the mountain to see what he could see" undoubtedly spent his cub-days in the hills of Connecticut, and Kilroy, hero of the GIs during the recent war, will prove to be a Nutmegger, many believe, if and when he is ever identified.

Connecticut's sons and daughters have been wandering off in search of new places, in pursuit of new ideas, since the days of the Pequots and the Nipmucks, and have succeeded in leaving the imprint of the Yankee

way of life wherever they set foot. At one time the western border of the state was the surf of the Pacific Ocean, and there are few square miles of the United States that haven't been visited by a wanderer from the Land of Steady Habits. They weren't content to move west alone, though, and evidence of their emigration is to be found in records pertaining to the early life of most of the states.

Vermont and New Hampshire, Ohio and Indiana, Arkansas and Missouri, Texas and Oklahoma, all counted Nutmeggers among their earliest settlers. The dairy industry that today identifies Wisconsin was founded by a group of Connecticut farmers. Moses Cleaveland of Canterbury invaded the Ohio Valley along with thousands of others from the rocky New England colony, and a misspelled version of his name now serves as title for one of the midwest's most impressive cities. The capital of the nation's largest state, Austin, Texas, was named after the son of a son of Connecticut. The midwest is sprinkled with Connecticut

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brick and saltbox houses and communities with such Yankee-sounding names as, for example, Hartford, Bridgeport, Danbury, Greenwich, Ridgefield, Lebanon and Middletown, all in Ohio. Connecticut's state motto, appropriately enough, means *He Who Is Transplanted Still Sustains*.

When the Revolutionary War ended, Connecticut granted those of her citizens whose lands or homes had been destroyed by the British plots known as *Fire Lands* in the Western Reserve, which is present-day Ohio. All other colonists, including thousands of Connecticut families, attracted by the fertile lands of the Ohio Valley paid for their acreage, and the Connecticut legislators set up an education fund with the money collected from these real estate transactions, with the result that Ohio's earliest settlers contributed more than fifteen millions of dollars toward the imprinting of the three Rs in young Yankee minds.

Ohio and Indiana have hundreds of apple orchards because of a Connecticut lass, a girl from Clinton who refused the proposal of one Jonathan Chapman about 1800. Chapman, broken-hearted, wandered off to Pennsylvania. Little is known of the girl, not even her name is known for certain, but the schoolchildren of this country are familiar with the nickname of her ex-suiter — Johnny Appleseed.

While Johnny Appleseed trudged along dusty trails with his leather sack on his shoulder, more and more

Connecticut people were packing their belongings and bidding good-bye to their neighbors. Before 1820, more than 70 per cent of an estimated million Connecticutites had left the tiny colony. Several theories have been advanced as to why Nutmeggers refused to stay home; the rocky terrain of the sector, the calling-card of an ice-age glacier, has been blamed, as well as the rumblings of the earth during the latter part of the eighteenth century when earthquake after earthquake tumbled Connecticut folk from their featherbeds. Although these quakes were of minor-league stature, they did little to endear the foothills to the Yankees. However, no matter the reason, the Yankees set out in search of a dozen varieties of rainbow gold.

II

The best-known of all Connecticut travelers, the Yankee peddler, never would have ventured beyond the limits of his community if this restlessness, this inquisitiveness that led some Nutmeggers to seek new lands, had not caused others who had remained behind to seek new methods of producing the needs of the day. The acute shortage of manpower to work the difficult farmland, plus the high cost of imported goods, led them to turn to small industry, and when the early peddlers returned and told of the clamoring by the outlying colonies for these products, they rolled up their sleeves and set to work.

The abandonment of the homeland

by the hale and hearty, plus the knowledge the hinterlands would purchase their gadgets, was only a part of the story of Connecticut's industrial rise. The development of water-power and the embargo during the War of 1812, the latter forcing the state to produce many formerly-imported goods, were further steps, as was the subsequent arrival of Irish, German, Canadian and English, Italian, Slavic and Scandinavian groups, thereby solving the manpower situation.

While their inland neighbors applied their ingenuity to manufacturing and farming, Connecticut's shoreliners fished, built boats and ships, sailed the latter to all of the world's ports, and assembled trading and whaling fleets that rivaled any on earth. New London was the state's leading port in the days of the wooden vessel. At the height of her period of importance as a whaling port, in 1850, more than a million dollars' worth of whale bone and oil passed through New London. The Pioneer, a whaler built and outfitted at a cost of \$15,000, returned from her maiden voyage with a cargo of bone and oil valued at \$150,000 — a 900 per cent profit for the owners.

The last of New London's wooden ships returned to port for the last time in 1909, but a major portion of her whaling fleet had been destroyed in 1864 by a Confederate raider in the Bering Sea, in the last sea battle of the War Between the States. Today, New London is the home of the

United States Coast Guard Academy and is a United States Navy submarine base.

New Haven was another important American port a hundred years ago. Many of the Flying Clippers were built in Stratford yards. Stonington still has a Portuguese colony founded by seamen who sailed under Yankee captains. Canton was named by a skipper who had sailed to China.

Yankee inquisitiveness and ingenuity, having at last found the necessary labor for their factories, branched out more every decade. Connecticut's inventors have received more patents in proportion to the state's population than those of any other state and have always led in this category since the day the Patent Office opened its doors in 1790. A list of Connecticut inventors and their discoveries reads like a skeleton script of a historical account of the industrialization of the country.

These inventions, together with the establishment of industries previously uninvestigated on these shores, brought the state to the fore as regards industry. Today, she ranks fourteenth in manufacturing and contains two of the nation's leading 25 industrial areas, despite the fact that she ranks thirty-first in population and forty-sixth in size. An average of 350 residents live in each of her square miles (only Rhode Island, New Jersey and Massachusetts are more densely populated), but only one third of her people are of native parentage. About 20 per cent of her

residents were born outside the confines of the country.

The state is no longer important agriculturally, aside from her tobacco tracts. Connecticut ranks ninth in tobacco growing and her shade-grown tobacco receives the highest per acre price in the nation. She produces fair-sized crops of corn and potatoes during her 182-day growing season but these yields are insignificant compared to any of the midwestern agricultural giants.

III

The Fundamental Orders of 1639, incorporated into the Connecticut colonial constitution at that early date, were based on a sermon delivered by the Rev. Thomas Hooker, founder of Hartford and one of this country's first liberals. The Fundamental Orders provided "that all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit; and that they have at all times the undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such a manner as they think expedient."

Thus, the citizens of Connecticut were guaranteed self-government 137 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. They had always known more freedom than their neighbors; their charter, granted in 1662 by Charles II, was more liberal than that of any other American colony. Legend has it that the charter was hidden in the hollow of an oak

tree twenty-five years later, when the crown-appointed governor of New England appeared in Hartford to confiscate the document, but historians do not place much stock in this story. Whether the charter was hidden or not is of little importance; the legend underlines the fact that Connecticut folk were the type who would resort to any means to preserve their liberty.

Incidentally, the first public election in America was held at Wethersfield in 1640, in defiance of the royal courts.

The state's political history is impressive. In addition to her own state and national representatives, Connecticut furnished the statesmen of many other states. Before 1890, 35 Nutmeggers sat in the Senate as congressmen from other states and 185 more were members of the House of Representatives from 22 states. Alexis de Tocqueville said: "Connecticut . . . makes the clock peddler, the schoolmaster and the Senator. The first gives you time, the second tells you what to do with it, and the third makes your law and your civilization."

There have been stains on the state's escutcheon, such as the Republican machine's purchasing of votes during the 1888 election, when Harrison defeated Cleveland. This scandal touched Connecticut, as well as West Virginia, Indiana and other "close" states. The state has been controlled by the railroads, by a group of leading families and by the utilities. J. Henry

Rorabeck, Republican leader and utilities head, who shot himself in 1937, was the state's most powerful "boss," and controlled the legislature and the lobbies. Many of his associates were involved in the notorious Waterbury and Merritt Parkway scandals. Rorabeck was mentally ill for some time prior to his suicide, many believe, and they cite as proof such instances as the occasion when he appeared at a Democratic outing and spoke in behalf of Governor Wilbur L. Cross, one of his arch-enemies.

The power held by Rorabeck was possible because of the antiquated system of representation in the state general assembly. The state house of representatives is made up of 272 legislators, 64 for a like number of small communities and 208 from 104 larger towns and cities. Under this system, larger cities like Hartford and New Haven have the same number of local voices, two, as small towns like Darien. Rorabeck's strength lay in his control of legislators from tiny communities.

The state senate consists of 36 senatorial district representatives, who are elected under a much more fair system of population representation. However, even here the districts are not of equal population. As further proof of the undemocratic distribution of strength in the lower house, opponents of the system cite the case of Fairfield County's 420,000 voters who elect eight senators and 38 representatives, while Tolland County, with 32,000 voters, and Windham

County, with 56,000 voters, elect one senator and 22 representatives and two senators and 24 representatives, respectively. In other words, a group of 88,000 citizens are represented by three senators and 46 representatives, while another group, nearly five times larger, elects only five more senators and eight *less* representatives.

Connecticut and Rhode Island are the only states that still select their candidates for state office under the convention, rather than the primary, system. Despite this undemocratic situation, a number of excellent leaders have been at the state head, including Governor Cross, who served four terms between 1931 and 1939. This former dean of the Graduate School of Yale University was 69 years of age at the time of his first inauguration. "Uncle Toby," as he was affectionately called, was an extremely popular chief executive, although all of his ideas weren't greeted with enthusiasm, including his suggestion that the six New England states merge to become a single, efficient commonwealth. All Yankeeland shouted, "Nay," but out of this suggestion came an arrangement whereby the six governors convene several times a year. When one of these sextets called on Franklin Roosevelt, the President smiled and said: "You fellows aren't planning to secede, are you?"

Connecticut voted for Roosevelt three times, having been in Hoover's column in 1932. The state has nearly always voted Republican in the rural areas and Democratic in the urban

sectors, with the former holding a slight edge. The voting machine used is a difficult one on which to split a ticket but Yankee voters have always been a ticket-splitting people. For example, they elected Republican Raymond Baldwin as governor in 1944, but turned thumbs down on Tom Dewey in the Presidential election. Today, Baldwin is a United States Senator.

Clare Boothe Luce could have had the Senatorial nomination for the asking in 1946 but passed up this opportunity. If she had run and been elected, as she undoubtedly would have, she would have become the first woman elected to the Senate who had not previously been appointed to office. Whether she will attempt to gain this honor at some time in the future is a favorite debating subject in the state's politically-minded circles.

IV

Fairfield County is shaped like a pistol, a pistol aimed at the heart of New York City. Whether this description is apt or not, it has a certain logic, inasmuch as Connecticut's southwestern corner is more a suburb of Bagdad-on-the-Subway than a part of Nutmegia.

Hardly a week goes by in which some resident of these 641 square miles (roughly an eighth of the state's territory) doesn't make the front pages of New York's press, which is as good a yardstick as any by which to measure the importance of the commuter group in the sector. The area

serves as legal residence for more so-called celebrities than any other locale in the nation, excepting New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles. Writers, artists, actors, musicians and radio folk, as well as Wall Street, industrial and advertising big-wigs by the hundreds are numbered among the taxpayers.

The lack of a state income tax, plus its proximity to Manhattan, makes the county so attractive to this element, which is known among the natives as "theatrical folk." Excellent railroad service (the New York, New Haven and Hartford line), plus one of the finest highways in the world, the Merritt Parkway, add to the attractions. The Mianus Gorge, where the United Nations wished to erect its "capital of the world," has been called the most beautiful area in New England, and some authorities claim Connecticut's terrain is as awe-inspiring as Grand Canyon or any of the other American scenic delights.

The county's population is not made up of "theatrical folk" and natives alone. There is another category, important throughout the state — the factory worker and small businessman, a large percentage of whom are first and second generation Americans. Bridgeport, Stamford, Norwalk and Danbury are highly industrialized. Bridgeport is the only city of importance in the country that consistently elects a Socialist mayor, Jasper McLevy. The labor vote in the county is important, as it is throughout the rest of the state.

Little farming is done by the Winchell-column names who call Fairfield County home, although a substantial number of them call their estates "farms" and raise a little hay or corn or keep a cow or horse or both. The backcountry, as the inland sector is called, abounds in genuine agricultural tracts, though, and the apple and tobacco sections mirror the upstate counties. A substantial dairy industry exists, too.

The natives and the commuters mix little or none at all. The former, known as "yokels" or "hayshakers" by the cosmopolites, are as financially independent as the invaders from New York by virtue of sales of their properties. The real estate operators have prospered along with the original owners of the acreage, although a few of these commission-chasers have suffered nervous indigestion, because of their clients' strange requests for properties with "two lakes" or with "a graveyard filled with tombstones dated pre-1800."

V

Carl Sandburg once wrote, "I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes," and then turning his back on his own observation, wrote a multi-volumed biography of Abe Lincoln. Connecticut's rank and file would hang any native son who dared to make such an observation, but they'd do it legally, digging among old statutes until they found a law prohibiting such verbiage. Connecticut has not lynched a man in all of the years that statistics regard-

ing the unclean subject have been kept — a matter of some 55 years — and only six states can so brag. They are the New England sextet.

More than 1300 residents of the state are listed in *Who's Who*. Records regarding the birthplaces of outstanding mature Americans of today have been compiled by Dr. E. L. Thorndike, and they reveal that 653 of every million Connecticutites born between 1890 and 1900 have been recognized as leaders in their respective fields. Only Utah and Massachusetts have more impressive records, according to the statistician.

Helen Hokinson's cartoons in the *New Yorker* and other periodicals have poked fun at her Connecticut neighbors who attend garden and literary club meetings, but beneath the humor in the situation lies the fact that the state's women are extremely interested in exchanging ideas, be they about gardens or government. Lecturers consider the state a gold mine. The state has hundreds of antique shops, book marts, historical houses and the like. Summer theatres dot the horizon annually and New Haven is a frequent try-out spot for Broadway productions. Surprisingly, none of Connecticut's radio stations are in the world-beater class.

Tourist accommodations are available throughout the state. Inns, hotels, tourist homes, trailer camps and cabins are to be found wherever vacationers and businessmen travel.

The Hartford *Courant* is the oldest daily paper in America that has ap-

peared continuously since its inception. The Waterbury *Republican and American* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1940 for its exposure of the city's mayor and his cronies as treasury-looters.

This country's first Ph.D. degree was conferred in 1861 at Yale, one of this country's leading universities but only one of 27 institutions of higher learning in Connecticut. Accredited colleges and universities include Albertus Magnus College in New Haven, the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Connecticut College for Women in New London, St. Joseph's College in Hartford, Wesleyan University in Middletown, state teachers' colleges in New Britain, Danbury, New Haven and Willimantic and the Coast Guard Academy in New London.

Children educated in Connecticut's 900-odd public schools are required to attend classes for at least 36 weeks a year, the highest minimum term in the land. Only one per cent of the population is without library service, there are 200 telephones for every thousand residents, 98 per cent of the homes have radios, and only about 400 dwellings are without toilets or privies. The state's safety record was the finest in the U. S. last year, and its auto death and injury totals have always been low considering the number of cars in use. There are more than a half-million motor vehicles registered in the state at this time.

Two of the nation's billion-dollar concerns are Hartford life insurance companies, and Nutmeggers are in the

habit of referring to Hartford as "the insurance capital of the world," pointing to the city's 45 firms. The truth is that New York City deserves the title.

VI

When a man sets out to discover what Connecticut is and what her people are like, he finds himself in the position of a John Gunther who travels throughout the 48 states attempting to feel the pulse of a nation. Generalities serve to describe the past and present and contradictions spring up like weeds in fertile land. To describe Connecticut's natural resources, plant and animal life, government, racial makeup, industry and commerce, agriculture, labor, architecture, education, art and literature would be a comparatively simple task (although quite encyclopedic), but to explain the ramifications of this description is a task beyond comprehension.

A calendar of annual events in Connecticut condenses a history of three hundred years and more of life into a page of dates and minute description, but the more than casual observer will, upon reading between the lines, take heed of the fact that Connecticut, unlike most of her sister states, is a miniature United States, an area containing most of the levels of life to be found in this nation of ours as well as most of the types of humans who bleed, sweat and cry in the 48 bodies politic.

Running down the list we come across dates set aside for art exhibits, church events, flower shows, Ukrai-

nian festivals, antique expositions, spelling bees, historical pageants, crew races, apple blossom festivals, skeet shooting competitions, Russian national holidays, collegiate commencements, dog shows, golf championships, subscription concerts, horse shows, Scottish games, lawn bowling tournaments, 4-H club gatherings, hunting and fishing seasons, county fairs, yacht club cruises, food exhibits, military celebrations, industrial exhibits, Swedish national holidays, vegetable growers' meetings, pomological shows and community sings.

There is a wealth of life, past and present, reflected in such a schedule, and the list tells of a people who follow all ways of life, all avenues of labor and play. The calendar points up the fact that there is no such animal as a typical Connecticutite or a typical American. There are Connecticutites and Connecticutites, and to put it mildly, there are Americans and Americans.

Natives of Connecticut like to tell a story about a resolution passed by the townspeople of the town of Milford in 1640. The resolution, which may be found in the carefully preserved records of the town, reads:

"Voted: That the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Voted: That the earth is given to the Saints. Voted: That we are the Saints."

There are few Yankees today who would go so far as to proclaim themselves persons of holy life, especially in civic records, but then they are a taciturn people. As a whole, the early settlers were disinclined to speak of their virtues, too, but the exceptions — like the Milford "saints" — could very likely be those Nutmeggers who settled in Vermont and Texas, two locales where state pride runs extremely high. Dorothy Thompson has written that Vermonters are Vermonters first and Americans by virtue of the fact of being Vermonters. A score of Dorothy Thompsons have said virtually the same thing about residents of the largest of the 48.

State pride is far from non-existent in present-day Connecticut but it seldom takes the form of exuberance so popular among the Texans. Rather than converse about the advantages of being a Nutmegger, the Connecticutite partakes of the life that is his, seemingly saying, "Why waste time talking about life when it's living that's important?"



PARTY DRESS

A STORY

BY GLORIA NEUSTADT BIGGS

DOUG CAMERON came home from the office late the afternoon of New Year's Eve, tired from the pressure of work and the excitement of the holidays. But as he parked the car in front of his house and walked up the narrow path that led to his door, the spark of optimism that he had felt all day burst into a bright little flame.

He had always had a childlike faith that the beginning of a new year would bring a change for the better. Neither his marriage nor his business, which had begun almost simultaneously two years ago when he left the Army, had gone well in the year now coming to a close. And it was good to have the feeling that both might improve in the new year.

But as he unlocked and opened the front door, Mary began calling to him from upstairs about her dress, and there was something in her voice that extinguished the hope quickly.

At first, he couldn't understand what she was talking about, but there was such uncontrolled despair in her tone that he threw his hat and news-

paper on the sofa and started for the stairs, still wearing his overcoat.

As he got to the foot of the steps, she came clattering down, holding her black velvet dress in her arms.

"Look at it," she demanded, pushing the dress toward him. "Look at it. I sent it to the cleaners to be steamed and the fools have ruined it. The stupid fools. They must have washed it. It's ruined. It's so tight I can hardly get it over my head. I've tried and tried to fix it — but it's hopeless."

He looked up from the dress at his wife. She was in her slip, and her hair, which had been mussed by trying on the dress, was falling down the back of her neck. The straps of her slip were soiled and there was something about her exaggerated despair that repelled him.

"What are you so upset about?" he asked. "It isn't a new dress, is it?"

"Of course it isn't new," she said, spitting out the words. "Everything I own is old. But what am I going to wear tonight? It's the only thing I have. I was banking on it. What am I going to do now? Go naked?"

GLORIA NEUSTADT BIGGS is fashion editor of the Hollywood Citizen-News and a freelance contributor to magazines. During the war she wrote technical manuals on aviation.

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He laughed, partly in relief and partly because it seemed so ridiculous that she could get that excited about a dress for Tom's party.

"Wear the suit I gave you for Christmas," he said. "I thought that's what you wanted it for."

"My suit? Wear a black gabardine suit to a New Year's Eve party? That shows how much you know. Nobody wears a black gabardine suit to a New Year's Eve party unless they don't know any better — or haven't got anything else to wear."

"Now, Mary." He was surprised at how fatigued he felt now that his optimism had vanished, and he went over to the sofa and sat down, taking off his overcoat as he went. "This isn't going to be that kind of a party. Tom's just asked a few friends in. They won't care what you're wearing. They're not like that at all."

"They're rich, aren't they?" she asked shrilly. "They live in Kensington Hills, don't they?"

"Tom isn't rich. He makes a lot more than I do and they live in a big house but —"

"Well," she interrupted, "maybe that's not your idea of being rich. But they can sure afford to dress up on New Year's Eve." And then, suddenly veering her tactics, "If I show up looking like a pauper, they'll think it's because you don't make enough money to buy me something decent."

For the first time, a look of annoyance sprang into his face.

"Let's not confuse the issue," he

said sharply. "You're not worrying about what you're going to wear on account of me."

"A fat lot you understand." She walked over to the large chair by the window and plopped herself down. "I'm not going," she said petulantly. "That's all there is to it. You can call them and tell them so."

He sat there a moment, watching her, and the sadness that crept into his eyes might have hurt her to tears, if she had looked and understood. Then he stood up and walked over to the telephone.

He didn't know Tom's number, but he picked up the receiver anyhow and placed his finger at random in one of the dial circles. As he began to turn the dial, she said exactly what he knew she would.

"Don't call them," she said. "Hang up. I'll think of something."

He replaced the receiver, went back to the sofa and picked up his hat and coat and his newspaper.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"Upstairs to shave," he answered as he walked out of the room.

"So you think I'll give in and go?"

He didn't answer.

"Why don't you stay here and help me think of something?"

"You'll think of something, Mary," he said, wearily climbing the stairs, "without any help from me."

II

He was standing in the bathroom in his trousers and undershirt, brushing the lather on his face, when he heard

her call out triumphantly from downstairs, "I've got it, Doug. I've got it."

And then the sound of her feet rushing upstairs with the same vehemence she had run down.

"I'll borrow a dress from Kay," she said jubilantly, appearing at the door of the bathroom.

He picked up his razor and began carefully scraping it down his face. "I thought Kay was away for the holidays."

"She is. That's just it. I've got the key to her house."

He held his razor in mid-air and turned to look at her. "You've got what?" he asked.

"The key to her house. She gave it to me last Fall that time she and Bill went away, so I could let that man in who was going to measure her windows for drapes. I forgot to give it back to her."

"You mean you're going over there and take one of her dresses without her knowing about it?"

"Why not? She'd lend it to me if she were here. You know that. What's wrong with taking it anyhow?"

"There's plenty wrong with taking it anyhow," he said slowly, "and you're not to do it."

"Why?"

"Because," he said firmly, "you're my wife."

"Oh, don't be so stuffy."

She put her hands up to fix her hair and moved a few steps toward him. He looked away from her and back at the mirror. She moved closer to

him, so that her bare shoulder rubbed his, and then she leaned back against the wall, turning her head so that she could look up into his face.

"Listen darling," she said, "you're taking me to a party where there'll be lots of people, all dressed beautifully. Maybe it seems silly to you, but I just can't help it if I suffer when I'm not dressed right. I get self-conscious and clumsy and — oh, I just want to go over in a corner and curl up and die. You wouldn't want me to feel that way, would you?"

He said nothing, and after a minute, she went on.

"They're all successful people, darling. You told me so yourself. And no matter what you think, they can't help but judge your business success by the way I'm dressed. Now, can they? If they were old friends of ours or something, it'd be different. But I hardly know them. And except for Tom, you don't know the rest of them any more than I do. Kay," she began speaking more slowly, "Kay won't care if I borrow her dress. It's just hanging there in her closet."

The anger and fury had completely disappeared from her face and voice. She was sweet now and pleading, soft-spoken and feminine.

Doug laid down his razor. "Look, Mary," he said earnestly. "You just don't go over to a friend's house when she's away and take one of her dresses without her knowing it. Because Kay's so generous, is all the more reason for not doing it. But no matter what the circumstances are, or who

the friend is, it wouldn't be right. And for this party tonight — there's no excuse at all. Tom and his friends are — well, you know — casual. They're not struggling to impress each other. They like you for yourself —"

"Oh," she said, turning away, "you think because you've seen them in slacks and stuff like that in the summertime that they always dress that way."

She walked over to the towel rack and began folding and straightening the towels. "I can see them — all those girls," she said in a dreamy far-away tone as though she were talking to herself, "laying out their evening gowns and their sequin bags and their mink coats. Right now, they're probably all taking long, hot baths or putting up their hair. But I can see them an hour or so from now, with their expensive perfumes and their jewelry and their brand-new evening gowns."

She laughed. "Oh sure," she said, "they'll look casual to you all right. But they'll only look that way because they've spent so much time and money on themselves."

She stopped talking and the scraping of his razor was the only sound in the room. He tried to concentrate on what he was doing and forget about her, but he could feel, as though it were physically touching him, the tension that was mounting in the room.

When she spoke, he was not surprised.

"I don't care," she said, "whether

you want me to take Kay's dress or not. I'm going to anyhow."

She waited for a moment, and then walked out of the bathroom and across the hall to their bedroom.

He heard her banging the closet door as she got out a dress and a coat, and then he heard her quickly run down the stairs and slam the front door.

III

He had finished shaving several minutes before she returned. But he didn't want to face her when she came back, so he shut and locked the bathroom door and took a shower. Then he found a nail file in the medicine cabinet and filed his nails, and took a soiled rag from behind the radiator and wiped off his shoes.

When he finally came out, she was standing before the mirror in their bedroom, wearing Kay's dress and waiting for him.

It was a very handsome gown, of black taffeta with long, slim sleeves and a full skirt that trailed a little on the floor in back. It fitted her very tightly over the bust and around the waist, but the most arresting part of the gown was the neckline. It was cut quite low and so wide that it fell off her shoulders a bit. She had piled her hair on top of her head in the way he liked best, and had made up her face.

She looked beautiful, and almost exactly the way she had looked the first night he met her.

"How do you like it?" she asked, smiling radiantly and twirling around

slowly so that he could see the full grace of her figure.

He stood there a minute, with no expression in his face.

"What will you do if something happens to the dress?" he asked.

"I'll buy her another. It only cost \$39.95."

He knew her well enough to know that she was lying.

"How do you know what it cost?" expecting to catch her in the lie.

She pointed to a little white card with a string attached that was propped up on her dressing table. "The price tag was still on the dress. That's how I knew."

He started across the room. "Kay's never worn the dress?"

"No." She looked up at him just in time to see him making for the dressing table, and went over to it herself more quickly than he, picked up the card and poked it down the front of her gown.

"I told you darling," she smiled, walking back to the mirror, "it cost \$39.95."

He stood behind her a moment, looking at her reflection in the mirror, studying her radiant face, her lovely white shoulders, the curved outlines of her young figure.

And he wondered how anyone, least of all himself, could know what she was really like when she looked this way.

It was after ten-thirty when she had finished her elaborate preparations for the party, and a few minutes past eleven when they reached Kensington

Hills. There was a long line of cars in front of Tom's house, a few, small mousy coupés like Doug's own, but most of them larger cars, sleek and glittering in the cold moonlight.

During the drive, she had been like a young girl with her first formal, excited and vain. Now she laughed triumphantly. "Thought you said Tom had just asked a few friends to drop in."

He pulled ahead of the line of cars and parked. She didn't wait for him to come around and open her door, but opened it herself and gingerly stepped out, holding her wide, long skirt well up from the ground.

Without bothering to shut the car door, she hurried up the street, past the row of parked cars and on to the brick walk that led to Tom's large and graceful home, with the bright lights gleaming through the heavily-curtained windows and spilling out over the well-kept lawn.

He locked the car, and followed along behind her. When she reached the front door, he was only half way up the walk, but she was too impatient to wait for him. She rang the bell.

He heard the bell, and he saw his wife lowering her skirt to the ground, spreading it delicately around her feet, and then eagerly pushing back her old fur coat so that a little of her bare shoulders showed. But he was still on the lower step that led up to the entrance way, when Tom flung open the door, so that he didn't see her exultant vanity disappear in-

stantly like the switching off of an electric light, when she looked into the huge, crowded living room and saw that not one of the girls at the party was wearing an evening gown.

It wasn't until he came into the house himself, with the people surging around him, and the laughter and music and choruses of "Happy New Year" flooding over him like a tide, that he saw her face.

She was looking up at him, a hard, dead smile on her mouth, a hideous sort of fear in her eyes. He knew that she was waiting for him to say some-

thing to his friends, to apologize for the way she was dressed. And he knew that if he didn't say it, she would spend much of the evening explaining and apologizing for it herself with involved, mean little lies.

But it didn't matter. Nothing mattered. Neither her fear nor her defeat. Not even she, herself.

The only thing that had any significance for him at all was his realization that within less than an hour, a new year would begin. And for the first time in his life, he was afraid of what it would bring.

PHRASE ORIGINS—20

PUT UP YOUR DUKES: *This invitation to a fight stems from rhyming slang, a lingo adopted by the London cockneys about 1840. In this variety of slang, rhyming words or phrases are substituted for other words. Thus, "apples and pears" means "stairs"; "read and write" means "fight." Where a few words are used as a rhyming synonym, the latter part of the phrase may be dropped. Thus, "china and plate," which was slang for "mate," became simply "china." The phrase "Duke of York" became a common slang expression for the word "fork," which was then used loosely to refer to fingers or hands (as in the expression "to fork over"). Eventually, the last part of the expression was dropped off, leaving "duke" as a synonym for "fork." Thus, "to put up your dukes" came to mean to raise your hands or fists.*

MORRIS ROSENBLUM

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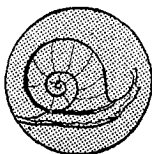
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MY HOME TOWN

BY W. E. WOODWARD

I SPENT my boyhood in Graniteville, a South Carolina cotton mill village. In the 1880s Graniteville was a feudal barony in everything but name. The machinery in its huge cotton mill was as modern as yesterday afternoon, but if the village itself and all its inhabitants could have been moved by a feat of magic to the England of 1745, or thereabouts, the people of Graniteville would have felt quite at home. The community was governed like the estate of a noble lord in the eighteenth century. The Graniteville Company owned every house in the village besides many square miles of adjacent land. The wages and salaries paid by the Company to the factory hands were the sole support of the entire population, including the merchants, the doctors, the preachers, the dress-makers — all except three or four families who had, in some way, become possessors of private incomes. Persons who were considered undesirable by the Company's managers were not permitted to live in the community. No Negroes lived in the village, for the Company would not

rent houses to them. Most of the colored people who had jobs in Graniteville lived in the near-by hamlet of Madison and walked up to Graniteville every day, a distance of about a mile.

The factory had been built, and the village founded, in 1845 by William Gregg of Charleston. He was a businessman of unusual courage and foresight. At that time nearly all the cotton grown in the Southern states was shipped either to mills in the North, or to England, to be spun and woven into cloth. The establishment of the Graniteville factory marked the beginning of a new era in southern cotton manufacture. There were already a few spinning and weaving mills in the Southern states, but none of them was in the class of Gregg's new factory either in size or efficiency. As the Graniteville enterprise grew and prospered it inspired other similar projects throughout the cotton belt.

William Gregg was not only a good organizer with a first-class talent for management, but he seems also to have been an unrelenting moral despot. His supervision of the mill-

W. E. WOODWARD is the author of *Tom Paine — America's Godfather and many other books in the fields of biography, history and economics. This article is an excerpt from his autobiography, The Gift of Life, to be published shortly by E. P. Dutton.*

workers included their daily habits, amusements, manners and morals. His paternalism could not, at times, be distinguished from pure tyranny, but the best of intentions lay behind it. To his way of thinking all the mill-hands were children — grown-up, perhaps, yet childish in temperament, with an abiding need of wise guidance. Gregg died in 1868, but his moral policies were carried on for many years thereafter by those in charge of the factory and village.

When I was a boy the lord of the manor was Thomas H. Rennie, though he was not called lord of the manor, or duke, or baron; his title was "superintendent." He was a Northerner, and in his younger days he had been a cotton-mill hand in Lewiston, Maine. There he had learned the processes of cotton manufacture by working for wages in every department of the factory, one after another. Mr. Rennie was a middle-aged gentleman of kindly disposition and with a lot of sympathy deep down in his make-up for sinners and ne'er-do-wells. But the Gregg tradition of keeping Graniteville pious, virtuous and highly respectable had been wished on him — or, more correctly, it was one of the functions of his job — and he did whatever he could to make the mill-hands and other inhabitants of the village live within the limits set by the founder.

Every mill family lived in a cottage that stood apart from the neighboring houses, and each cottage had a garden large enough to grow most of the

vegetables for its needs. Almost every family kept a flock of hens; one of my few daily after-school duties was to collect the eggs. We raised pigs also, and never failed to have two porkers ready for hog-killing in November.

II

The typical mill cottage consisted of four rooms — a sitting room, two bedrooms, and a kitchen. My parents rented one of these houses although my father was not employed by the Company for several years after we had moved to Graniteville but worked for my uncle as a clerk and bartender. The houses had no running water, plumbing, gas or electric light. They were simply large wooden boxes, painted white, with a shingle roof. Their ceilings were high, their windows large and light-giving, and they were pretty comfortable even in winter, when we always had a fire of big logs on the wide hearth.

Now, here in New York, I look back with fondness and deep affection, down the years to our simple cottage and sunny life in Graniteville. To me it was a life of dreams: I lay in the shade of the trees and had day-dreams of the world and the people in it.

Our little town looked attractive, with its shady streets, white cottages and pleasant-looking gardens. The white oaks and chinaberry trees in the streets, and in some of the yards, served to ward off the intense heat of the Southern summer. Today, when I think of Graniteville, there comes into my mind a vision of green

trees, white houses and red roses. High forest-covered hills rise on both sides of the Horse Creek valley, and the village nestles in between them. The hills are beautiful and impressive.

The mill-hands worked sixty-nine hours a week — twelve hours a day for five days and nine hours on Saturday. The “rising bell,” rung by a night watchman at the factory, tolled at five o’clock every morning except Sunday. Its deep, vibrant tones penetrated into every room in the village. The rising bell was the signal for the wives to get up and begin to prepare breakfast, which consisted usually of hominy, fried eggs, bacon, coffee and corn bread.

I was a sound sleeper then, but the rising bell often woke me. On winter mornings at five o’clock it was still as dark as midnight, with the bright stars glittering in the sky. I wondered then, and I still wonder, what there is in life for people who begin their day’s work before dawn in a factory full of noises and foul air, in which they remain all day, and from which they come home only after nightfall.

The average factory pay at Graniteville for a skilled worker was then about a dollar and a half a day, but untrained laborers, who had not learned to handle the machinery, could be hired for much less, and were glad to get the jobs. They picked up the waste, swept floors, and delivered the bobbins and warps to the weavers — all heavy manual labor. The hours were long and the wages were small, but the cost of living was correspond-

ingly low. It may seem incredible to the careless money-spenders of today — but it is nevertheless true — that in the Grover Cleveland era a factory hand in a South Carolina village could support himself, his wife and two children on as little as six dollars a week.

There was really no way to spend money except on food, clothes and liquor. A considerable portion of the food was raised by the mill-hands themselves. Clothing was cheap and it was worn until it was shiny with shabbiness. The Company did not permit the sale of liquor in any form in Graniteville, but in Madison, a suburb not owned by the Company, there were three barrooms where whisky was sold so cheaply that a tired mill-hand, if he felt in the mood, might get drunk at a cost of about fifty cents. The village had no paid amusements, not even a tiny theatre; or a soda fountain, or a restaurant, where a young man might take his best girl for a meal.

By nine o’clock in the evening, winter or summer, most of the houses were dark. People who rise at five in the morning and work twelve hours a day go to bed early. But homegoers might be met occasionally in the streets until midnight, young men and girls who had been to a party. Prayer meetings were popular, for these religious assemblies had a social atmosphere. Young men attended them with the hope of meeting a girl and escorting her home, and the girls — or some of them — went to the meetings with the same idea in mind.

III

Twice a year the sleepy little town was stirred into a kind of frenzy by a revival meeting. These campaigns for increasing the membership of the churches lasted about two weeks. They were conducted by professional revivalists, assisted by the local pastor.

The professional revivalists went from one town to another the year round. In the make-up of the organization one man was an organist, another played a powerful trombone that filled one's ears, the church and everything else with a reverberating din. There was also a singer whose voice, luscious and emotional, was strong enough to make all other human sounds sink into the class of whispers. Besides these musicians, there were usually two preachers in the outfit.

The revival crusade began always on a Sunday evening, and there was a meeting thereafter every evening for two weeks. The crusade was based on fear — the fear of everlasting hell-fire — and not on the joys of heaven, though the bliss of salvation was mentioned casually. God was depicted as a malignant devil who would send a sinner, who had done nothing more hideous than steal a bushel of apples, to hell to burn forever.

I went to the revival meetings every night — for they were as exciting as a show — and sat on a bench with half a dozen boys. The hell-fire argument had no effect on me, for I did not believe in hell.

Not all the people in Graniteville attended the revivals. My parents never went to even one of the meetings. For the first few days the revival services were subdued and wholly unemotional. Before and after the sermon the preachers would go about the body of the church, among the congregation, meeting people, shaking hands with them, and conversing in a rather jovial, good-natured manner. I was always patted on the back and given a word of welcome. "And you, my little man," the preacher would say, "it's fine to see you here." The sermons and the accompanying music acquired more and more warmth as the campaign went on. These experts in revival tactics were skillful in building up the emotional basis of mass hysteria.

Some of the fiery sermons would make a listener's hair stand on end. They described the tortures of the damned, their screams and the howling that rose from the burning lakes of hell. "Have you ever touched a red-hot iron?" I heard one of the preachers yell. "Have you ever held your hand, even for a second, in a live flame? Have you ever spilt a drop of molten lead on your flesh? In hell the damned live in flames, they walk on red-hot iron; the fiends give them molten lead to drink."

He paused for a moment and held a handkerchief to his eyes as if he could not bear the sight of the damned. From around the altar came the sobs and groans of the mourners who had left their seats and gone

forward when sinners and repentant souls had been invited to approach the altar and kneel.

"You wonder why they don't die under all that torture," the preacher continued. Then he shouted at the top of his voice, "They don't die because in hell there is no death. They must exist forever in a lake of fire. The suffering they have to endure would kill anyone here on earth in ten seconds but the damned souls in hell cannot die."

From the prostrate forms around the altar came a chorus of moans, and a woman's voice, calling loudly, "God save me, a sinner!"

"As long as you are on this earth, you can repent and be saved," the reverend gentleman declaimed, his voice filling the church as water fills a pail. "But you cannot repent when you are in hell; then it will be too late. God doesn't hear the prayers of those who are burning in eternal fire. Souls in hell do not belong to God; they belong to Satan, and he laughs at their suffering."

At the close of every meeting the mourners at the altar rose and with the rest of the assembly joined in singing a hymn. Many of them became members of the church then and there.

I recall one occasion when a dynamic preacher conducted the services. His voice had a great range, and it was moving and persuasive. He called for mourners to come and kneel at the altar. The people went up in droves, but the benchful of boys

around me snickered and joked at them. "There goes old Sim Hugh," said Bert Andrews, who sat next to me. "I guess now he's made up his mind not to cheat any more when he weighs our beef." Hugh was the village butcher. Then came Maebelle Ott, the town's bad girl. "Oh, oh, oh," came in groans from the boys. "What's all the fellows goin' to do now, if she gets religion? Oh, oh."

The meeting went on, with the rolling, deep-toned organ music, the exhortations of the preacher and the sighs and groans from the recumbent people around the pulpit. After a while I looked around me and I saw that nearly every person had gone up to the altar. The boys had become silent. No more snickering or funny remarks. Then, all of a sudden, one of the boys, with tears on his face, rose and made his way up to the mourners' bench. He was followed, in a shame-faced kind of way, by all the others, and I found myself alone. Then I looked around and saw that except for myself the body of the church was empty. Every person in the place—man, boy, woman and girl—was lying around the altar, sobbing.

The preacher noticed me and began to preach directly to me, and the golden-voiced tenor went into song. He sang:

There are ninety and nine in the fold
And one is left out in the cold.

One of the ministers walked down the aisle and sat on the bench close to

me, nestling up cozily with his arm around my shoulders. "Oh, my poor, poor boy," he said with tears in his voice, "don't you want to be saved?" I said, "I don't know." The black-coated young minister whispered, "Come to Jesus. Come now. All your friends are at the altar." I shook my head and said, "No, I don't want to go up there."

His next question was sternly asked. It was: "Do you want to go to hell?" I answered that by saying, "I don't believe there is any hell." He withdrew his arm at once, rose and looked at me savagely, saying, "Then go your way and be damned." He left me abruptly, and nobody else paid any attention to me.

These revivals had a good effect on the morals of the community; for a while, anyway. Perhaps they would have been wholly out of place in other surroundings, but not so in Graniteville. The mill-hands, with few exceptions were simply children in mind and temperament, and responded to suggestions in the manner of young and ignorant boys and girls. To them heaven and hell were localities, as real and material in their make-up as Georgia and Florida.

IV

I realize now that I was quite different in temperament and inclination from the boys I knew. I was quiet and reserved, while all the others, as I recall them, were noisy, gay and lively. I never yelled at anybody or anything; indeed I do not remember having

ever shouted at any time in my life; but the boys in the school had the habit of yelling several hours a day at each other, while they were playing games or in derision of somebody or something.

I was a studious lad, with a vivid imagination, and I think that I must have been somewhat superior in manner, not intentionally, however. I had a few close friends among the boys who liked me and whom I liked, but not more than three or four. Among the grown folks of the village I had a good reputation — excellent, in fact — for genteel behavior and a studious disposition. But when I was about eleven years old I lost the kindly regard of a lot of my elders. Several events, occurring one after the other within a few months, brought about this result.

I had read somewhere, in what I thought was a scientific book, that a frog could live without air for some time, I forget how long, and the book told of experiments in burying live frogs for days, and of finding them alive when they were dug up. I made up my mind to try that, so I caught a frog and buried it in the vegetable garden back of our house. I had told nobody of what I intended to do; nevertheless my proceedings in this matter were closely witnessed. The wife of our next-door neighbor, standing at a window, saw me dig a hole and put the live, squirming frog in it, and pack the earth down. It seemed to her that I was revealing an unsuspected streak of devilish cruelty. This

incident became part of the news of the day, but no one told my parents of it. "The frog was alive," Mrs. Jepson said to her cronies. "The poor thing was kicking and trying to get away, but that cruel young devil buried it. Buried it alive, in cold blood. I could see he just loved to torture the creature."

I put it in the ground at ten o'clock on Saturday morning and intended to dig it up on Sunday afternoon, but I was too impatient to wait, so I uncovered the frog after it had been buried about six hours. As soon as the earth was removed Mr. Frog leaped up and went hopping away as lively as ever. My watcher was not at her window, and did not witness the end of the experiment, so she never learned that the victim had lived through it.

The next incident occurred a few weeks later. Robbie Peterson borrowed my geography; he had left his own at home. When he gave it back to me I looked through it and saw that he had defaced it with pencil marks and smears of various kinds. I told him what I thought of him for messing up my book, and he replied with insulting words. We had quite a row, and he went back to his desk muttering that he'd teach me a lesson.

That afternoon, when school was over and I was walking home with five or six boys, Robbie Peterson waylaid me. He stepped out from behind a tree and before I knew what was happening he had struck me in the

face, and then began to beat me with his fists.

I had never before, at any time in my life, been struck in anger by anyone. My father had never even slapped me, although I had deserved a good slapping more than once. Father used to say, not to me, but to Mother: "I'm too poor to leave the boy anything in the way of worldly goods, so I'll be damned if I'll give him a beating to remember me by." The attack by the Peterson boy took me by surprise; I had never thought that anybody would actually strike me. Just think, for a moment, of the inner sense of remoteness or superiority that I must have had. Strike me! Why, never, but young Peterson had actually done it. I wanted to escape, so I fled for home, sobbing as I ran. The boy came after me, right at my heels and hitting me occasionally on the back yelling, "Coward! Coward!" I could hear the group of boys laughing and jeering as I fled. After I had gone about two hundred yards Peterson gave up the chase, and I plodded on home. I felt utterly disgraced, and did not know what to do. I said nothing to Father — or to Mother — about what had happened, but sat silent and unresponsive all evening.

Next morning my mind was made up; I would fight Robbie Peterson that very day, and give him a beating unless he turned out to be the stronger one of us; in that case he would have to beat me until I was too weak to move, for I knew I would never give in to him.

All the boys looked at me coldly when I appeared at school, and the girls glanced in my direction and snickered and made whispered remarks to one another. I realized that I had won the school's prize for cowardice. At recess, when we all went out on the playground, I walked over to where Robbie Peterson was standing. Without saying a word I struck him in the face and knocked him down. I was surprised at my ability to do that, for I had no idea that I could lay him flat with a single blow.

He rose and came at me; I could see the look of scared astonishment on his face, and I saw blood trickling from his nose. Already there was a crowd of boys around us. He seized me around the waist but I pushed him off and threw him to the ground, face downward. Then, before he could rise, I leaped on him and gave him a pummeling. By that time he was calling for help — shrieking and squirming, and yelling, "Pull him off, he's trying to kill me!" It was a warm day, and he was not wearing a coat but only a shirt. I got my hand under the collar of his shirt and tore it from his back. It was in shreds when I let him rise, and I held the pieces. He stood naked from the waist up, and he was blubbering and wiping blood from his face. He made no effort to come at me again, but stared at the ragged strips of his shirt, which I had thrown at his feet. When the recess was over he did not go back into the schoolroom, but went home with another boy to keep him company.

That evening his father came to our house to see my father and tell him how outrageously I had treated his boy. Until then my father had heard nothing of the fight. He listened quietly to Mr. Peterson, who said that I should be punished severely. I heard it all clearly as I was in the next room, with the door half open. "I hate to say it, Mr. Woodward," said Robbie Peterson's father, "but that lad of yours has murder in his heart, and if you don't correct it, God knows what he'll do ten years from now."

After he had departed my father had me tell him what had happened — about Robbie's attack on me and how I ran home without striking back; and then about my encounter with him that morning; how I had given him a beating and had torn his shirt into shreds.

Father smiled and patted me on the head. "That's the way to do it, my boy," he said. "Give 'em hell." That was fine, but the impression that my doings made on the gossips of the village was far from pleasant. By that time many people in the community believed that I buried animals alive as a regular practice. "And now," said the talebearers, "he has started on human beings. It looks like he tried to kill Robbie Peterson. He tore the poor boy's shirt off his back, and Robbie came home half-naked, with his face all bloody."

A month or so later things got worse, and in their eyes I became queer as well as dangerous. A tramp

stealing a ride on a freight train fell off near the village and was cut to pieces under the wheels. It happened at night, and the man's body lay on the track until dawn when a Negro, on his way to work, saw the bloody, dismembered corpse. He ran into the village and told everyone he met what he had seen. The local constable went down with a stretcher and some helpers and brought the remains of the tramp to a small vacant store on the main street. They laid the body on the floor to await the arrival of the county coroner.

A small knot of men collected in the street before the store, and they were standing there when I came along on my way to school. "Willie, d'you want to see something interestin', a reg'lar sight?" said one of the bystanders. I replied that I would like to see whatever it was. I had not heard of the tramp's fate, and I thought they had a peep show or an ornament of some kind behind the closed door. I learned later that, as a joke, they had already let two boys, one at a time, enter the bare room where the corpse was lying, and had had a big laugh when the boy inside saw the torn and bloody body and beat on the door, begging them to open it.

The constable, smiling and winking at the men standing by, opened the door, pushed me into the room and pulled the door shut. Then I heard him lock it. I found myself in a dim room, with a strange-looking object lying on the floor. It took me about half a minute to realize that I was

staring at a dead man who was almost cut to pieces with his bowels and other internal organs exposed. I had no idea who he was, or what had happened.

I was just on the point of screaming "Let me out" and beating on the door with my fists when I thought of the time when I had run away from young Peterson and how he and the boys laughed and called me a coward. Alone in the room with the mangled body I made up my mind that nobody would call me a coward on this occasion. I went to the windows at one side of the room and saw that they had iron bars across them; no way to escape. Then I went into a corner as far as I could get from the corpse.

For some time — ten minutes, maybe — I remained quiet, saying nothing, doing nothing. I could hear one of the men in the street wondering when I would start yelling. Then I heard the constable say that he was going to open the door at once. "Maybe the boy has fainted," he remarked, "and we must get him out."

As I heard the key enter the lock I hurried over and squatted down beside the body of the tramp, and stared at it intently. When the big, broad-shouldered constable came in, I pointed to the torn, wide-open abdomen and said excitedly, "You know, I've always thought the liver was on the left side, and now I see it is on the right. There it is — see it! But it is cut in two pieces."

The constable, whose name I cannot remember, did not even glance at

the dead body. He gave me a stern, staring look, and pointed to the open door. "You get out of here, you young devil," he said furiously. "Get out and stay out, and don't let me catch you trying to sneak back."

These stories about me were told and retold, over and over, with many exaggerations. "They say he tried to kill the Peterson boy and they were about to bring him up in court, but his daddy begged 'em to let him off." And I tortured live animals; I had buried a live frog, just out of pure cruelty.

"Another queer thing is the way he loves corpses," said the gossips. "You remember when that man was killed by the train, well, they let Willie Woodward go in the room and see the dead man. They oughtn't to have done it, but he begged so hard to see the corpse that finally they let him in. He was in there a long time, and when they went in to see what he was doing, they caught him tinker-

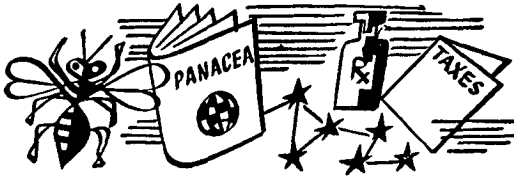
ing with the dead body. Actually handling the liver, they say."

So I became known among the lot of Graniteville people as "that there little ole Willie Woodward." I may say here that the expression "that there" has a colloquial significance among Southerners. When it is used it means that the speaker does not want to be identified in any way with the person mentioned. It indicates remoteness and aversion. The adjective "old" has also a derogatory meaning, and it is used without regard to the age of the person or object that is being discussed.

My purpose in giving so much space to my fall in local esteem is to show how easily a false reputation may be acquired. I have seen it come about a number of times in respect to other people. And, curiously enough, a false reputation for generosity, wisdom, foresight, sanctity and purity may be acquired by the same process, turned in a different direction.



THE SOAP BOX



EDITORIAL NOTES

The call issued in September for profiles of newspapers brought forth, to our great pleasure, a huge number of offers from practicing newspapermen to write-up their own or other papers. We already have in our lockers a penetrating and charmingly written article on the Dallas, Texas, *Morning News* — “The Old Lady of Lamar Street” — one of the most solid and colorful newspapers of the South. It is by Stanley Walker, who made journalistic history when he was city editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*. He used to work for *The Old Lady*, and he writes about her *con amore*. Newspapermen will read it with high feeling, and all others interested in an expert analysis of an important journal will also be attracted by it. We hope to print it in an early issue. Other newspaper articles will follow regularly thereafter.

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The article, “The Catholic-Protestant Feud,” by the Rev. Alson J.

Smith in this issue, perhaps calls for special mention. It describes with remarkable objectivity a situation in contemporary American life that merits the attention of every mature man and woman. Religion, particularly as it operates in the political realm, is now a major issue in national affairs, and the likelihood is that it will become of greater importance as time goes on. Because of the nervous tension that prevails in the international, national and personal spheres, religion has also assumed a greater place in the lives of many individuals than it has done for decades. Many seek — and also find — solace in it, whereas but a short while ago the same people entertained only contempt for religion. On the other hand, a large number of former believers have strayed away from their churches, for, according to them, religion has been proved a complete fraud. We would like to print discussions of the religious problem as it affects the various planes of life, and we call upon our clerical and lay readers to send us their manuscripts and opinions. Needless to say, THE

AMERICAN MERCURY will remain independent, championing no creed or faith and refusing to give any aid or comfort to bigotry of any sort. We realize that the discussion of religion is fraught with dangers, but that is hardly a reason for decent, fair-minded men and women to shun it.



With this issue we inaugurate a new department, "The Record Cabinet," which will appear several times a year. The department will give readers critiques of the latest records of interest to intelligent music lovers, which is to say, men and women who hold the masters in proper respect but who also find pleasure in such music as graces *Show Boat*, *Porgy and Bess* and *Oklahoma*.

Speaking of music, we confess that we've had difficulty in obtaining the sort of articles on the subject that seem worthy of print. We do not want profound analyses of Bach's counterpoint or of the polyphony of Arcangelo Corelli. Such matters are well covered in Sir George Grove's massive *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and other excellent reference works. We want rather brief essays on musical matters that will please the professional musician and, at the same time, inform and edify the amateur and the ordinary intelligent reader who goes to a good concert occasionally and likes to listen both to the Philharmonic and Morton Gould. If any prospective contributors are at a loss for topics, here are

some: the dubious quality of many private teachers of piano, violin and other instruments; the growth of excellent schools of music over the country; the increase in the number of symphony orchestras and its possible effect on American musical culture; the significance of the booming record industry; the continuing low quality of American musical critics — with the brilliant exceptions (several of them outside New York City); the possible reasons behind the anemia of most American music in the classical forms; and the especially embarrassing poverty of American opera.

## TWO FEARS THAT GRIP US

There are two big fears that now grip the American people. They are, the fear of another depression and the fear of another war. Must we have another depression? Is there no alternative to another World War? Yes, there are alternatives to both depressions and wars but we have not yet found them.

We must first realize that just wishful thinking will not prevent either. We cannot bury our heads in the sand and hope that they won't come to us, and escape. There are certain causes for the depressions that follow wars. We have had a depression after every war in our history. And so far the only way to get out of a depression has been another war. During the war the money is poured out to labor and the farmers, and since the goods are not available to buy, the prices go

up. That causes an expansion of industry at the close of the war and a post-war prosperity. But when we get caught up with the goods that were denied by the war, and when we get all our money spent that was poured out during the war, the depression comes.

When one factory closes and turns off laborers, these laborers lose their purchasing power to buy the products of other laborers, and thus they start the downward spiral that never ends until the next war. Oh yes, we can have a New Deal to stop a depression. We can have government money poured out into the channels of trade in order to produce an artificial prosperity, but this is like a war in that it is borrowed money. Our prosperity is dependent on this borrowed money. We have millions of people dependent on this borrowed money for their living. It creates a political machine to keep the New Deal party in power, but it does not solve the problem. The problem can be solved by an organization of our private enterprise system, but so far we have not been willing or have not discovered a way to do that. And we could prevent the next war by a definite plan of peace, but so far we have not taken the time to work that out on a permanent basis. And so, we must go on with these two fears ever before us — another depression followed by another World War.

PAUL V. BECK

*Republican Candidate for  
Governor of Oklahoma*

*Tulsa, Okla.*

## PROPAGANDA

It is interesting how propaganda can condition men's minds. The most extraordinary conditioning is done, of course, by the Russians.

Thus anyone who opposes the Soviet government because he believes it is totalitarian and treats its people indecently is considered an enemy of the Russian people. On the other hand, anyone who opposes Franco because he is totalitarian and treats the Spanish people indecently is considered a friend of the Spanish people.

The logic would be amusing if it were not so serious.

X. Y. Z.

*New York City*

## PERELMAN AND THURBER

I am almost afraid to write this brief note, but I have to or I will scream. Am I the only one in the country who sees nothing funny in the writings of S. J. Perelman and James Thurber? In all frankness, I think both of them are dreadfully dull and far, far from humorous.

ESTELLE M. EATON

*New Rochelle, N. Y.*

## FREE ENTERPRISE

Whenever I hear the phrase "free enterprise" I snicker to myself. Isn't that our old and discredited friend "laissez faire"? . . . And speaking of

free enterprise (or laissez faire), I would like to ask the august National Association of Manufacturers what its boys now think of the advertisements they ran in the newspapers some months ago, in which they assured the American people that once the OPA was killed the magic of free enterprise and free competition, etc., would begin to work, plenty of goods would start flowing, and prices would become normal. Need I tell the NAM masterminds that prices are now at an all-time peak? Then why doesn't the NAM run advertisements in the papers, of the same size and fervor as the previous ones, apologizing to the American people? And I think the Senators and Congressmen (especially the pompous Senators) who helped ditch the OPA should do the same.

CONRAD JASON

*Swampscott, Mass.*

## THERE IS ANOTHER WAY

Today we find the radicals jumping at the throats of the reactionaries, each group seeing only the good in its own philosophy, and the evil in the other. Each group believes there must be a fight to the finish with a clear-cut decision. This would mean, either a collectivist state in which the two primary factors in production, land and labor, are government-controlled, or else a capitalist state in which both labor and land are privately administered.

But there are a great many persons

who agree with the great American economic philosopher, Henry George, that while labor is a man's personal concern and right, land (including all natural resources) is the concern of the people collectively, and government, representing the people, is entitled to the income from land, and should guarantee to its members equality of opportunity in using nature's products.

This middle way rejects the evils of both the doctrines of capitalism and collectivism, and salvages the truly good and necessary parts of both.

MARION H. SMITH

*Lamont, Mich.*

## MONOGAMY AND DIVORCE

Neither males nor females are really monogamous. Marriage as an institution is tolerated because in various ways we depart from it and obtain relief. Prostitution and promiscuity are widespread. Divorce is still somewhat unpopular, unfortunately. Why couldn't we liberalize it, and thus render it unnecessary to lie, pretend, travel thousands of miles, pay heavy legal fees, etc., in order to win a divorce decree? Marriage is a nuisance and evil when it spells constant friction, mutual dislike and unhappiness. Trial marriages have been tried and have failed. Economical and rational divorce statutes had better be given an adequate trial before we favor experiments of a more radical kind.

VICTOR S. YARROS

*La Jolla, Cal.*

## MELVILLE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

BY RUDOLPH VON ABELE

HERMAN MELVILLE wrote sixteen books in prose and verse, but only one masterpiece. Ten of these books, including *Moby Dick*, were produced between 1846 and 1857, in a cloudburst of literary activity probably unequaled among American writers; the other six, five of which were collections of poems, followed one another at intervals during the next thirty years, though only four of them were published, and those in limited editions. In the years between 1846 and 1857 Melville was a famous man, a novelist whose books were widely read and noticed; but after 1860 it was as if he had not lived. The early years had seen him travel thousands of miles in whalers, merchantmen and warships; had seen him live with and study the cruelty and vulgarity, the maliciousness and avarice of the men who lived in forecastles; and had seen him spend a month among a tribe of savages whose name, Typee, meant "eaters of men." The years after 1866 he spent in New York, moving day after day between his home and the Customs House,

"grave, firm, square-bearded," and almost forgotten. In the period before the war he looked upon himself as a novelist; during the latter part of his life he considered himself primarily a poet. The contrast between the two periods is melodramatic in its force. At first glance it might seem as though he had burned himself out after the tremendous intellectual and physical effort of writing *Moby Dick*, and had then lingered on another thirty years, his flame feebly flickering every now and then, before being allowed to die. But this is not quite true, as his later writing testifies. Following *Moby Dick* there was a momentary slackening; but as he aged, Melville found that there was something remaining to be said which did not demand the volcanism that had produced his earlier work, but rather that autumnal calm of mind in which Shakespeare's last plays are cast. There was a tempest, and a serenity, and the two were intimately related.

"Evil," he wrote in *Mardi*, his third book, "is the chronic malady of the universe; and checked in one place,

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breaks forth in another." Yet in the same book he also said, "As well hate a seraph, as a shark. Both were made by the same hand." Here is the dilemma out of which his spiritual and intellectual agony arose, as well as the reconciliation that finally gave him peace; the same dilemma that led Blake to write *The Tyger*:

And did he smile his work to see?  
Did He who made the Lamb make thee?

It was the problem faced by every sensitive and perceptive person in any age — how to respond to the fact of evil in the world — to the problem of man's survival in an alien, indifferent universe? What is to be done in the face of evil? Explain it away? But it cannot be explained away: it persists, purposeless, malignant, arbitrary. How can its destruction of the good, the innocent, the beautiful, its sparing of the bad, the guilty, the deformed, be justified? This is what Job asked; it is what Hamlet contended with; it is Dante's problem and Dostoevsky's, and, latterly, it forms one of the basic elements in Kafka's writing, where it is symbolized by the perpetual hostility of the universe toward an individual who does not even know of what crime, if any, he is being accused.

## II

Evil exists; and in any save the most anarchic and lawless universe it must have, if not a rational explanation, at least some proper place in the hierarchy of things. Man appears to be

doomed by his nature to wage the war of purposive, conscious thought against the movement of a complex of impersonal forces which behave with absolute indifference toward him and his endeavors. In order to reduce the conflict to something relatively intelligible and comprehensible, he tends to conceive of the universe in symbolic, personal terms, as a sentient and mythological object with which he can grapple on an anthropomorphic level. Out of this comes the effort to "get at the fundamental truth of the universe," the "mystery of creation" — an effort which can be productive of great tragedy, and which gave birth to the tragedy that haunted Melville.

Of that tragedy Captain Ahab is the hero. The White Whale, a dumb, inarticulate mammal, has carelessly, gratuitously injured him; and his outraged attempt to discover the justification and meaning of this accident expands with the rapidity of a bubble to an attempt to explain the entire universe, of which the Whale itself becomes the symbol. With a fanatic yet noble disregard of himself, of others, and of any fragmentary happiness he might achieve, Ahab sets himself the task of finding out the absolute answer to this question, no matter where, or how difficult, it may be.

The quest is an intensely human one — it is, in fact, the most human quest of all; but in it Ahab becomes inhuman and a madman. This is his tragedy. And the tragedy is not only that he becomes insane, but that he

knows it, accepts it, and moves on toward his fated end. "I'm demoniac," he cries. "I am madness maddened." Yet he does not — cannot — try to stop himself. What he wants is what Aristotle said was natural to man: he wants to know — to know the final truth, if any such exists. But long before the beginning of *Moby Dick* his desire to know has become a monomania. He has abandoned all human ties and affections. He treats his men with a despotic ruthlessness surpassed only by his behavior toward himself, which is masochistic and implacable in the extreme. His pride is fierce, and his purpose immovable. Nothing can deter or intimidate him. Caught in a typhoon, he wants to command the lightning, and when his compass needles are made useless by the storm, he remagnetizes them, and demands that his men acknowledge him "lord of the level lodestone." He cannot ignore the Whale even in sleep; his hatred of it is absolute and personal; he hates it as a cunning, malicious, evil power; and his effort to discover why he was injured by it is fundamentally motivated by a paranoiac wish to demonstrate its malignancy and his own innocence. He wants to comprehend the universe, and yet he wants to comprehend it in his own terms: and he will succeed if it kills him and all who chance to impinge upon him in the process. And this it does. His insane obstinacy, his courage, his tragic sense of being irrevocably damned, his abandonment of a wife and children, his dehumanization of

himself, are all in the end powerless to achieve for him the knowledge he demands. The universe runs over and crushes him beneath the very "speechless, placeless power" which he worships in it. The Whale, when he finds it, rams his ship, the *Pequod*, and sinks it; and Ahab, caught by his own harpoon line, is whipped out of his boat into the sea, "voicelessly as Turkish mutes bowstring their victims." He is destroyed; and his destroyer, the universe, does not even deign to speak to him; for the Whale is dumb to the end.

Ahab, all through his quest, is the archetype of the unscientific intelligence. A man of great mental power, he commits the primal sin of attempting to separate himself from nature, to set up an antagonism between himself and it, and to carry that separation to its ultimate extreme. He cannot accept the fact — which, even now, is not recognized by the mass of human beings — that man is an element in nature, subject, like all other elements in nature, to the operation of tendencies beyond his power to escape; set down in an environment he cannot choose, and to which he must adapt himself as well as his peculiar endowments enable him to. But man is self-conscious; as a result he has the illusion of free-will; and because of this he is a rebel. And the price of rebellion is death.

*Moby Dick*, like most of Melville's important writings — as might be imagined from the nature of its subject-matter — is an allegorical ro-



## III

mance. Its style, as in his other important books, though with a perfection not to be found in them, is one which fuses allegory and sensuous experience as nearly as possible into dynamic metaphor; into what F. O. Matthiessen has called a "thinking in images." Experience and thought are welded into a simultaneous whole; the thought and the thing which provoked the thought are communicated at the same moment, instead of in sequential order. In *Moby Dick*, for example, speaking of whales' heads being hoisted along both sides of the ship, Melville suddenly breaks out:

So, when on one side you hoist in Locke's head, you go over that way; but now, on the other side, hoist in Kant's and you come back again; but in very poor plight. Thus, some minds forever keep trimming boat. Oh, ye foolish! throw all these thunderheads overboard, and then you will float light and right.

Time after time throughout the book Melville's mind can be seen at work giving metaphoric significance to sensuous data even as it apprehends them. The whole novel, indeed, is but one great metaphor of the same type; and so are the recurrences of the color white, of land, and of the sea, as symbols in his work. Wherever white is, there is mystery and ambiguity, the dual aspects of beauty and frightfulness, the lily and the shroud. And the contrast between land and sea is of a similar sort; an apposition between the known, the calm, the familiar, and the remote, the obscure, the terrible.

In terms of subject, style and maturity of treatment, *Moby Dick* is Melville's one really great book. He grew toward it and away from it; and it was the culmination of his entire artistic life. Born on August 1, 1818, into a comfortable, stiff, correct, formal, upright bourgeois family of New York merchants, he manifested quite early a disposition toward reflectiveness and solitude. Upon his father's death in 1832, he had to go to work; but after a few years a restless streak in him, coupled with a romantic vision of the world given to him by a peripatetic father, led him to take to the sea. Here he saw human life at its most gratuitously cruel; and many of his visions perished. The England his father had glorified turned into a hastily glimpsed heap of slums and filthy factories. His disillusionment must have been great; but after an interval of schoolteaching, he shipped again, this time on a whaler, in 1840. His voyaging lasted four years, and took him all over the Pacific. In these ships he could study human nature (or at least the male half) as in a laboratory; and what he acquired there he probably could not have learned at any school. His poverty kept him close to the common life, and provided with the raw material of experience a mind which had a strong disposition toward metaphysical thought.

During these four years, too, he recaptured for a brief moment the benign myth of the world which he had

lost, when he jumped ship and spent a month with the Typees, in the Marquesas Islands. Here, he believed, was a place without sin, money, jealousy, hate, cupidity — nothing, in other words, of the hypocritical and self-assertive brown-stone “civilization” he had been reared in. Here nakedness was a virtue, love free, food abundant, beauty everywhere. Like all myths, this one too disappeared when he left, as he felt himself compelled to do. Escaping aboard another whaler, he transferred to a United States frigate in the Sandwich Islands. His nautical career was ended, dramatically enough, with his being thrown from the ship’s yardarm into the ocean off the Virginia Capes — an experience of which he left a brilliant description in *White-Jacket*.

After this he traveled little — once to London and once to Palestine. Until he finally settled in New York he oscillated between it and a farm called Arrowhead, near Pittsfield, Massachusetts. In 1847 he married the daughter of Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of Massachusetts. His outward life was dreary and penurious, for he lived almost exclusively upon his writings; his family was not the most congenial in the world; his wife, while loyal and faithful, did not always understand him; and between him and his children there was a wide gulf. Of his two sons, one died of a gunshot wound which might have been suicide; and the other ran away from home. His erratic habits, his peculiar sense of humor, his irritability, and his

introspective nature, were difficult for his family, which was typical of their age, respectable and industrious; and he did not try to make things easier for them.

## IV

Within a year after his return from the Pacific he had completed a book, which was published as *Typee*. The next four years saw him write four more books; *Omoo*, *Mardi*, *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*; and in the summer of 1850 he began work on *Moby Dick*. These early volumes are interesting as travel literature, and as romances; but if *Moby Dick* had not been written, they would in all probability not be remembered. They are merely preparation for the enormous spending of himself which took place all during 1850 and 1851, when his mind, working at top speed, focused all his mastery of style and method, all his experience and all his knowledge, upon the creation of a single book. The effort exhausted him and for a time seriously endangered his physical and mental health; and may thus have been responsible for the astonishing erraticism and hysteria of his next book, *Pierre*, which followed it in 1852. In *Pierre*, and in his subsequent prose works, the ethic is one of desperation. It was Melville’s lowest point. The proposition is developed that to attempt to live on earth by any moral ideal is to become evil. In *Moby Dick* there are no answers given; in the next books Melville concludes that answers are impossible, or, worse,

are nonexistent. Virtue itself, in the face of the malignancy of the universe, becomes irrelevant. Adherence to the moral law ensures destruction in a world to which the moral law is meaningless.

Had Melville died then, this bleak and bitter conclusion would have represented the sum of what he had learned. But in the course of his old age something happened to him which reconciled him to the universe and to the precarious existence of man in it. As he settled into the routine of his work at the customs house, he began increasingly to think in lyric terms; and for the most part wrote poetry. By and large, it deserves the obscurity into which it has fallen; for Melville, while, like Joyce, a master of prose rhythm, dropped into flatness and banality in verse. *Clarel*, his most ambitious effort, a long narrative poem with Palestine as its background, while interesting because of its discursive comments on Western civilization in the nineteenth century, is too tedious and pedestrian in versification to justify itself as a long poem. But every now and then; Melville was successful:

Indolence is heaven's ally here,  
And energy the child of hell;  
The Good Man pouring from his pitcher  
    clear  
But brims the poisoned well.

And at such moments, he achieved a crabbed brilliance which has been until recently unjustly neglected.

The fragment quoted represents the old Melville, the nihilist: it is iron-

ically titled "Fragments of a Lost Gnostic Poem of the Twelfth Century."

His last writing, a short novel called *Billy Budd*, is something different again. A young and beautiful sailor aboard a British warship innocently incurs the hatred of Claggart, the master-at-arms, who denounces him to the captain as an incitor to mutiny. Billy, whose only defect is a stammer, cannot find words quickly enough to repel the accusation; and instead, his indignation expresses itself in his striking Claggart dead. The captain, whose sympathies are all with Billy, can do nothing according to the Articles of War but try him for murder. "Struck dead by an angel of God," he says. "Yet the angel must hang." And regardless of sympathy or equity, Billy is sentenced to hang. His last words are: "God bless Captain Vere."

"As well hate a seraph, as a shark. Both were made by the same hand." This, after all, is the answer to the problem; it is Melville's final reconciliation with the world. Though what has happened is unjust and evil, yet it is necessary according to the rigid canons of life on this imperfect earth, where mutinies are always possible and discipline must be enforced. What is done is done, as all moral actions are done, in the common interest: an officer has been killed, and the slayer must answer for it lest other officers be killed by other sailors in the future. This is a stern morality, a social, almost Spinozistic morality;

yet there is no bitterness or cursing of fate in it. What is done is done in full recognition of the tragic limitations within which men must live and act. The world as it is, by implication, is accepted. No action, however rational, can be entirely free of evil; the effort, then, must be to choose those actions which result in the least evil. Indifferentism is wrong. The basic criterion must be the welfare of the whole social body, considered as an aggregate of interdependent individuals. In the hands of one less profoundly concerned with the individual's moral status than Melville, such a view might easily become perverted into an anti-personal collectivism, but with him it never did. For all his criticism of democracy he, like Whitman, remained a democrat in default of finding a better credo.

In the end Melville found serenity and understanding; and in the course of his search for it, produced one of the world's unique books. He had his limitations, chief among which was his omission of women, and hence of all that vast area of human experi-

ence centering upon sex, from his writings. The few women he did attempt to create were unreal in both speech and behavior, idealist images which, while probably throwing psychological light on his own sexual frustrations and maladjustments, are ineffectual as literature. Though outwardly he lived a normal family life, Melville appears to have suffered from profound sexual inhibitions, at which his poem, "After the Pleasure Party," obscurely hints:

Nothing may help of heal  
While Amor incensed remembers wrong.  
Vindictive, not himself he'll spare;  
For scope to give his vengeance play  
Himself he'll blaspheme and betray.

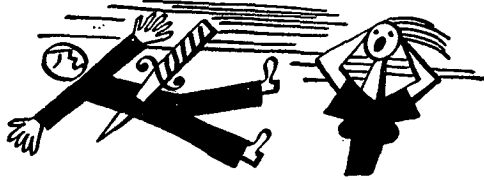
But despite this severe limitation upon his art, Melville still belongs, with Hawthorne, Whitman and James, in that small company of American writers who have dealt greatly with the great questions. The distinguishing mark of great poetry is its ability to create a living and symbolically meaningful world. In *Moby Dick* Melville triumphantly succeeded in so doing.

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# THE THEATRE

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

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## WHAT IS AN ACTRESS?

ONE of the supplementary functions of the theatre is to provide its patrons with the opportunity to become wrath with one another over their personal estimates of its actresses. The opportunity is no new dispensation; it has been a boon for years. Nor has it been taken full advantage of by the laity alone; the critics, those theoretical cocks of jurisprudence, have no less exercised their gala rights and privileges. Long before the arguments over Bernhardt and Duse shattered the rafters, no actress, however eminent in her craft, was spared her share of artistic disparagement, which on occasion approached the obscene. And the battles, which often have edged toward fisticuffs, continue unabated to this day and hour.

They are understandable. For not only, apparently, in any appraisal of an actress must the appraiser's insuppressible personal prejudice for or against her visually and corporeally be taken into the umpire's consideration, but the appraisal itself is founded

upon the inexactness of just what it is that constitutes or does not constitute histrionic virtuosity. Many people, of course, can recognize absolutely bad acting when they see it. But it is doubtful whether they are quite so proficient in assaying the middle ground, and more doubtful still whether they can recognize the real thing for what it is. It isn't that they may not feel that the performance is a good one; it is simply that they do not know, and could not for the life of them explain, why it is.

Margaret Anglin, for example, is in the opinion of many one of the most expert actresses the modern American stage has offered. Yet, because many, many more have not cottoned to her stage-wise *in propria persona*, not only has she been a less than popularly endorsed one but was not until this season drafted for a play in some years. Maude Adams, on the other hand, was in the opinion of just as many an actress of very considerably less stature. Yet, because many, many more were pleased with her as a stage figure, she reigned in the popular

favor until her voluntary retirement.

Today, in further example and confusion, the esteem in which Katharine Cornell is held materially out-measures that which is the portion of Judith Anderson, though it would be hard to believe that the latter is not the superior in every department of the craft save alone looks and physical magnetism. I shall not be so unchivalrous as to mention names in another and more severe direction, but at least one current actress whose knowledge of the calling is wholly superficial is nevertheless pretty generally accepted as the genuine article by laymen and many professional critics, while one who could give her cards and spades, and even a pair of aces on sleeve elastics, is amiably but nonetheless firmly dismissed. The former simply happens to be blessed with a striking personality, whereas the latter was neglected in that attribute by the good fairies at cradle-time.

It is that way often. The only actress on the present American stage whose proficiency has not suffered critically from any such external physical considerations is Helen Hayes. But there are others who have found themselves victims and whose measure of talent has in turn found itself up against the hurdle.

Two seasons ago, a young novice, Barbara Bel Geddes, was acclaimed as a surprisingly adept actress for her performance in *Deep Are the Roots*. Her performance was an appealing and charming one and, further, her personality fitted the part and her

pretty looks enhanced it. That much freely granted. But of acting, except in the most elementary and obvious sense, there was little. And so with all but two of the various lauded girls who have played the rôle of Sally Middleton in the popular comedy success, *The Voice of the Turtle*.

## II

There is the matter, too, of direction. That many an actress has received credit which properly belongs to a skillful director is an old story. And that many an unskillful director has not received blame for an actress' poor performance is an equally old one. But there are very few people, and that includes a fair number of the professional critics, who are able to discern where the director begins and the actress lets off, or vice versa. There have been and there are actresses who on rare occasions have managed first-rate performances in spite of their directors. But there are very many more whose abilities at times have been hamstrung, distorted and botched by them.

The late Henry Miller, one of the best directors of acting our theatre has known, was able to make an only passable actress seem for the time being to be one of high competence, and to make a really good one seem even superior to herself. And the same held true of David Belasco, empiric in other dramatic departments though he may have been. In the case of both, it sometimes happened that when an actress left the

fold and came under other direction her audiences could not understand why one previously venerated by them as something of a histrionic genius had so suddenly deteriorated and gone to pot.

There is probably no actress on our stage at the present time who knows more about the technical aspects of acting than the German-born Elisabeth Bergner. But most of her performances are bad for the reason that her husband, Paul Czinner, who has long directed her, permits her so to overlay and lacquer her essential competences with personal tricks and mannerisms that the abilities are buried and made mock of. There is, in turn, an actress contemporary with Miss Bergner who obviously knows little more about her craft than a moderately talented amateur. Yet shrewd direction now and again has been successful in palming her off on audiences, along with many of the critics, as an actress of some authentic position. In this, she is helped of course by a considerable physical attractiveness and a flair for comporting herself with an interesting dash.

A canny director sometimes succeeds in covering up an actress' deficiencies and embellishing her better qualities through one chicane or another. If her walk is on the ungraceful side, he sees to it that she either does considerable sitting or moves behind obscuring chairs, sofas, pianos, and what not. If she is graceful, as Gertrude Lawrence is, he takes every advantage of a script to work in as

much movement for her as he can, short of converting the occasion into a semblance of *Les Sylphides*. An actress who may be awkward in gesture is protected by a constant interruption of gesture on the part of her acting vis-à-vis. One who is expert in it is allowed to go to it with a cast directed as if it were afflicted with paralysis of the arms. There is no actress so poor that she can not be made to appear better by directing the others on the stage to seem as poor as she herself factually is. There is hardly one so good, on the other hand, that she may not be made to appear less so by directing another in her most important scene either quietly to underplay her or convincingly to pretend to a winning humility in the presence of the august one.

Duse became at least in a measure the figure she was because D'Annunzio, during his reign over her, not merely wrote rôles exactly fitted to her but, more importantly, saw to it that the woman as woman was never too much superseded by the woman as actress. Réjane triumphed when she slapped any director who sought to elevate greasepaint over inner composition and spirit. "I am for nature and against naturalism," said Coquelin. He also said what is in large part the sharpest commentary ever written on acting: "The two beings which co-exist in the actress are inseparable, but it is the one who sees who must be the master. It is the soul, the other is the body. It is the reason, and its



double is to the other as rhyme is to reason: a slave who must obey. The more it is the master, the more the actress is an artist."

## III

The nature of a rôle is frequently another item in the confusion of appraisal. A wrong rôle, as should be sufficiently known but frequently is not, may give to what is critically very good acting the effect, in the minds of many, of very poor. Helen Hayes' performance in *Mr. Gilhooly* in a rôle quite unsuited to her, for example, was at bottom as expert as many of her other performances, but simply because her personality was at variance with the rôle most of her audiences charged the poor effect to her acting. Ina Claire was every bit as proficient in an ill-suited dramatic rôle in *Children of Darkness* as she has been in comedy rôles, but the objection to her by tryout audiences was such that she saw the way the critical wind would blow if she appeared in it in New York and abandoned the part.

The late Charles Frohman was sagacious enough not to allow his stars, with rare exception, to take any such chances with a chuckleheaded public and its critical guides. He accordingly almost always saw to it that they played much the same rôle, whatever the play and whatever the rôle may have been called. One of the few chances he ever took was with Ethel Barrymore in Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* and, though she was first-rate in it, her audiences still admired

her talents more greatly in her previous pretty little nothings. He said that he should have learned his lesson in the case of Maude Adams in *The Pretty Sister of José*. The virtue of her performance was lost sight of because of the strangeness of the rôle, and she was charged by the opaque, both lay and professional, with shortcomings which mostly and actually were nonexistent.

A more recent illustration. Two seasons ago, the late Laurette Taylor's portrayal of the mother rôle in *The Glass Menagerie* was hailed, and deservedly, as one of the finest examples of the acting art that our contemporary stage had seen. But I wonder how many of her eulogists knew why it was what it was, that is, aside from its readily to be discerned and appreciated aspects. Did they know, for instance, that she on this occasion profited herself by rejecting Coquelin's dictum, "The first duty of a player is respect for his text; whatever he says must be said as the author wrote it"? Far from doing any such thing, she threw a lot of the Tennessee Williams text to the winds and adapted and rephrased it, very ingeniously, to her own personal acting ends. Did they further know that her performance varied markedly from night to night, that it was never the same, and that she skillfully maneuvered it to the different reactions of successive audiences?

Did they appreciate her dexterity in timing her laughs so that they would not suffer from what coughing

there might be in the audience? Did they know that what seemed "natural" in her performance was frequently the result of audacious ad libbing? Did they understand that seldom was her articulation and modulation of a line of dialogue the same, and that in this regard she followed her instinct as to a particular audience's character and receptivity? Did they comprehend, in short, that what they regarded, and correctly, to be the top acting performance of its year was not one performance but successively all of a dozen or more, that its entrepreneur had directed herself in

it without outside aid, that she created a character out of bricks and straw supplied only meagerly by the playwright, and that she literally acted the woman who was Laurette Taylor into a rôle which itself did not in any way even faintly resemble her and which in sum, for all its embroideries, remained Laurette Taylor from first to last? She did not, as the expression goes, lose herself in the part. She lost, and with uncommon beauty and effect, the part in Laurette Taylor.

Where, in such a case, do the stern critical principles as to the art of acting get off?

## SAM MASON'S BARN

BY KAYE STARBIRD

Up on his hillside, to match the view,  
Sam Mason painted his cowbarn blue.  
Sam's neighbor saw it and shook his head;  
"Guess the pore cuss has went blind," he said,  
"Any fool knows that you paint barns red."

No one could call Sam Mason a fool.  
He learned of life in his own hard school.  
With hay-crops failing and colts going lame  
And silos levelled by unseen flame,  
It taxed a man to remain the same.

Yet Sam had room and a round, gold sun,  
A pink star shining when chores were done,  
And always his barn like a bluebird's feather  
To help him say through the heartless weather,  
"The world and my farm go good together."

# THE DANGERS AND CURE OF OBESITY

BY MILTON L. ZISOWITZ

**A**LTHOUGH many people who are overweight refuse to accept the fact, modern medical opinion is agreed that virtually all cases of obesity are caused by overeating. There is a tendency among the obese to blame their weight on their glands, their metabolism, even their heredity. In most cases this is nonsense. More than 95 per cent of obese persons are that way because they eat more food than their bodies require — and for no other reason.

Nevertheless, obesity is a major cause of poor health and premature death, easily outranking such widely-publicized menaces as smoking and drinking. There are many doctors who seriously question whether moderate quantities of tobacco or alcohol can do the normal person any harm. No doctor, however, will dispute the danger of being even slightly overweight. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has discovered that even those carefully-examined obese persons who are accepted for insurance have a mortality rate well above the norm. One recent study disclosed

that men who are 20 per cent overweight have a mortality rate one third above the average; those who are 30 per cent overweight, one half above the average; and those who are 50 per cent overweight, about double the average. These statistics refer only to overweight men who were accepted for insurance. If the uninsurables had been included in the study, the death rates among the obese would have been shown to be even higher.

Most of the important diseases of adult life, especially the cardiovascular and renal diseases and diabetes — which together account for almost 50 per cent of deaths in the United States — are more common among the overweight. The incidence of high blood pressure is more than 150 per cent greater among obese persons than among those of normal weight. The death rate for heart disease and cerebral hemorrhage is 50 per cent higher among the overweight; for angina pectoris it is more than 100 per cent higher, and for Bright's disease 75 per cent higher. The death rate for diabetes is 150 per cent higher

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among the overweight, and for those who are 25 per cent or more overweight the death rate is 700 per cent higher.

There is hardly an organ in the human body which is not affected adversely by excess fat, and physicians have become increasingly aware that overweight patients suffering from pneumonia or undergoing surgical operations are always in special danger. It is interesting to note that even suicides and fatal accidents claim a disproportionately large number of the obese.

The relation between excess weight and the diseases of adulthood has become so apparent that authorities like Dr. Frank A. Evans of Pittsburgh's Western Pennsylvania Hospital now believe that one of the major weapons in the war against the so-called degenerative diseases of maturity must be a widespread and intensive campaign against obesity.

## II

In the past it was fairly common for doctors to agree with their patients that their excess fat was either a family trait, in which case no treatment could be effective, or that it was caused by some metabolic or endocrine disorder, which could be corrected by the administration of drugs and glandular extracts. These theories have been refuted by the careful studies of such authorities as Dr. Hilde Bruch of Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons and Dr. Louis H. Newburgh of the Uni-

versity of Michigan Medical School. Dr. Newburgh states emphatically that "many painstaking investigations have failed to demonstrate any abnormal metabolic process that accounts for the accumulation of fat, nor is obesity ever produced by increased or diminished activity of an endocrine gland."

The heredity theory has been discounted by Dr. Bruch and her associates, who explain the phenomenon of fat families on the basis of family eating habits. In this connection a report by Dr. Israel Bram of Philadelphia is worth noting. Dr. Bram was treating two brothers for obesity. One of them, aged fourteen, weighed 235 pounds; the other, aged sixteen, weighed 223. Since both their parents were unusually heavy, it had been assumed that the boys' obesity was a hereditary trait. After a careful questioning, however, the boys revealed that they were both enormous eaters. Along with a wide variety of fattening foods, they were accustomed to taking a loaf of bread each at every meal. When Dr. Bram discovered that their father was a baker, the explanation of the "hereditary" obesity became clear.

The favorite protestation of the overweight, that they eat far less than the normal person, is almost always shown to be false when they are required to keep careful accounts of the food they consume. One mother who was asked about the eating habits of her 265-pound daughter denied that the girl ate excessively. A close check

revealed, however, that the child's normal lunch consisted of six slices of bread (in sandwiches), four apples, six bananas, two or three glasses of milk and a piece of cake. The single most important fact about obesity has been stated with great clarity by Dr. Evans:

The degree of obesity is a measure of the amount of overeating in which the patient has indulged. The fat cannot be inhaled, has not been absorbed through the skin, cannot be blamed on any gland, endocrine or otherwise, for there is none with an aperture through which it could have been inserted. This material got under the skin by only one portal of entry, the mouth; it was eaten. Attempted compromises with this indisputable fact have seriously clouded thinking as to the nature and causes of obesity.

It is extremely difficult to convince patients that dieting is the only effective method of taking off weight. Many of them flit about from one doctor to another looking for drugs and prescriptions which will help them reduce. Others patronize massage and exercise salons, or register for expensive courses at "beauty schools." They succeed only in contributing to the millions of dollars which these well-advertised businesses gross annually. While massage is harmless, and may even succeed in toning up flabby muscles and skin and in creating a temporary feeling of well-being, it is absolutely useless in removing fat.

The exercise and sweating treatments prescribed by the reducing salons are not only useless, but some-

times extremely harmful. Sweating, says Dr. Evans, reduces weight only insofar as it eliminates water from the body, and this places a strain upon the circulatory system, which is already under a strain because of the excess fat.

Exercise is virtually as futile. An overweight person would have to climb twenty flights of stairs to prevent the energy contained in one slice of bread from being converted into fat. A walk of one mile at a brisk rate will burn up the potential fat in only one ounce of cream. In order to eliminate one pound of fat, the conscientious exerciser would have to walk about 36 miles! Aside from the obvious impracticality of this much exercise, and aside from the fact that it is likely to generate a voracious appetite, it may be extremely harmful.

Dr. Newburgh recalls the case of a young woman who was 24 years old, five feet six-and-one-half inches tall, and who weighed 289 pounds when she was admitted to a clinic for obesity. She was placed on a strict diet, but she decided, without telling the doctors, to hasten her reduction by taking exercise. One day, after about eight hours of walking about and shopping, she felt no desire for even the limited amount of food allowed in her diet. Nevertheless, she continued her vigorous activities that evening. On the following day she refused to eat any of her meals, and by 10:30 in the evening she was so ill that she vomited even a small amount of orange juice which she tried to drink.

On the fourth and fifth days she was forced to abandon all her exercises; she stayed in bed and ate nothing. On the morning of the sixth day she was so nauseated that she vomited every time she tried to eat. Her vision was blurred, she had a pain in the pit of her stomach and she was short of breath. When these symptoms increased in intensity, she finally reported her difficulties to the doctor. She was taken to the hospital and treated for acute acidosis. Twenty-four hours later she had recovered, convinced, finally, of the dangers of self-prescribed exercise.

In their attempts to avoid dieting, or to speed up its effects, many overweight persons have resorted to even more drastic expedients. Some have tried imitating the old Roman custom of regurgitating meals. Others dose themselves with drugs like ipecac and digitalis in an attempt to induce nausea and loss of appetite. Various purgatives, advertised as weight-reducers, are also tried without success. Even such drugs as benzedrine, which are useful in temporarily curbing the appetite, cannot in themselves eliminate fat.

None of these drugs should ever be used without expert advice. Most physicians tend to frown on these appetite-depressing agents, not only because they delude the obese into thinking that they can reduce without strict dieting, but also because their continued use may lead to drug addiction and a number of other serious complications.

## III

Writing in a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Dr. S. Charles Freed, a San Francisco endocrinologist, stated that "the psychological factors in obesity are paramount. . . . Treatment of the patient should be based on an understanding of the psychologic reasons for his overeating."

Many internists and general practitioners, as well as psychiatrists, have swung around to this viewpoint. The fact that many obese persons who are desperately unhappy about their weight nevertheless persist in eating more food than their bodies require seems to indicate, to these doctors, that a large part of the difficulty is psychological.

There are many emotional disturbances which can manifest themselves in overeating. Basically, however, the uncontrollable appetite is an infantile reaction—a regression to that stage of life at which the greatest pleasures and comforts were derived through the mouth, in nursing, eating and drinking. As the child develops, other pleasurable stimuli should affect his emotional life, but in some families this does not take place. Many parents pride themselves on the enormous quantities of food they serve, and they encourage their children to overeat. In some families, especially those in the lower-income groups, food is a major topic of conversation, and the parents' emphasis on the importance of food is transmitted to the children.

For the offspring of such families the subjects of food and eating are charged with an unhealthy emotional content.

This view is ably summed up by Drs. Edward Weiss and O. Spurgeon English, who state in their book, *Psychosomatic Medicine*:

This excessive interest in feeding is an unconscious effort of the mother to treat her children well and to strengthen them for life's battles for food because of her weak emotional relationship to them. She is unable to give them the strength of her love. . . . She fails to make them independent and self-reliant through emotional strength and wisdom but tries to make them grow strong through size alone. They are not taught to derive pleasure through learning, play, competition and social contacts, but are kept over-protected and over-indulged. The result is often a lack of ambition, poor social adaptation, unhappiness and *obesity*.

For every individual who worries himself thin there are three who worry themselves fat. To support this assertion, recent investigators can cite numerous instances of men and women who compensate for their frustrations, their boredom and their anxieties by overeating. One woman, 28 years old, had maintained a constant weight of 104 pounds for thirteen years. When her husband was inducted into the service there was at first no variation in her weight. However, after her husband had been sent overseas and seen combat, she developed the habit of eating between meals and at bed-time. In eight months her weight had increased to 158 pounds. She consulted a doctor,

who explained to her why she was overeating. She then lost six pounds in four weeks, but did not progress beyond this point until her husband returned from overseas. Thereafter she lost rapidly until she was down to 110, where she has remained.

Dr. Newburgh reports a sadder case. The patient was 25 years old when she entered the clinic. She was five feet seven-and-one-half inches tall and weighed 248 pounds. Six years previously she had married a man who was apparently a successful innkeeper. The first three years of married life were peaceful and pleasurable. Then, for no reason apparent to the patient, her husband began drinking heavily, took to gambling, neglected his business and went into debt. He became ill-humored and rough. To increase his income he converted the inn into a brothel and demanded that his wife, who was one of the waitresses, permit the patrons to have intercourse with her. When she refused, he beat her so violently that on a number of occasions she was forced to remain in bed for several weeks. She now noticed that for the first time in her life she was becoming nervous and irritable, and that she was annoyed by a gnawing feeling in her stomach. She discovered quickly that large and frequent meals helped to relieve her misery, and she took to eating and drinking almost continuously throughout the day. At the beginning of the period of overeating she weighed 148 pounds, which was normal for her. During the next two and



one half years she gained 100 pounds. Shortly before entering the clinic she had secured a divorce, and at this point she stopped gaining weight. She expressed great gratitude and relief when it became apparent to her that the doctors intended to treat her in a dignified manner, that they understood her problem, and that they were confident of making her a presentable young woman again. Placed on a diet, she lost seventeen pounds during the 31 days in which she was an in-patient, and after her discharge she continued to lose weight at a satisfactory rate.

#### IV

However, it is not only in extreme cases that emotional problems have been related to obesity. Dr. Robert A. Matthews of Philadelphia's Jefferson Hospital reports that in all but 5 or 6 of 50 cases of obesity which were studied very carefully, psychogenic factors were shown to be clearly related to the onset and development of overeating. Most patients will confess, when they are closely questioned, that under emotional stress they eat more food than usual.

Dr. Freed has reported on the results of a survey taken among 500 obesity patients. They were asked, "When you are nervous or worried, do you eat more or less?" Three hundred and seventy replied that they either ate larger meals or ate more frequently, and of the remainder, 95 said that they believed they ate more when they were idle, bored or tired.

The other 35 patients claimed that their appetites were always good.

An experiment performed at the Duke University School of Medicine under the direction of Dr. William N. Nicholson indicates clearly the value of psychological treatment in the cure of obesity. Ninety-three patients were divided into four groups. The 38 patients in Group I were given superficial psychotherapy after a careful study of their personalities and of the emotional causes of their overweight. Although the relation between overeating and excess fat was made clear to them, they were given neither medication nor a calculated diet. In Group II, 35 patients were put on a carefully-worked-out diet, and an experienced dietitian was assigned to help them carry it out. No medication was given, nor was any effort at psychotherapy made. Ten patients in Group III were treated with benzedrine alone, and ten in Group IV with thyroid medication alone. All 93 cases were followed for at least one year. The results were as follows: Group I, 26 successes, 12 failures; Group II, 9 successes, 26 failures; Groups III and IV, no successes. The psychotherapy had apparently worked, and Dr. Nicholson stresses the point that only simple psychiatric treatment, the kind that any good general practitioner can give, was used. He assumes, too, that if diet and psychotherapy had been combined, the number of successes in Groups I and II would have increased.

Dr. Evans once said that "the great-

est advance possible in preventive medicine at present would result from the prevention or early cure of obesity with the attendant lower death rate from diabetes alone." Equally important, perhaps, is the improved mental

attitude exhibited by patients who have reduced to normal weight. Many of them report, after treatment for obesity, that for the first time in their lives they know what it means to have a feeling of well-being.

## THE BOOKKEEPER

*BY ETHEL BARNETT DE VITO*

His black umbrella, viewless lodging place,  
The pince nez on his pale and proper face,  
Even the ring upon his bloodless hand,  
All seem as dusty, dry, discreet and dim  
As though all that he touched could not withstand  
But must take on the character of him.

His pale eyes, empty as a pair of noughts  
Seem to reveal how many years his thoughts  
Have been like figures entered in a head  
Designed to sum and balance, day and night,  
Concerned with nothing, nothing done and said  
Save what might make the balance sheet come right.

There have been days, absurdly strange and sweet  
When spring came, even to the sooty street  
From ledger to lodgings; days when he might mark  
A hurdy-gurdy tune hung in the air,  
The scent of lilacs blowing from the park,  
The look of sunlight on a girl's blown hair —

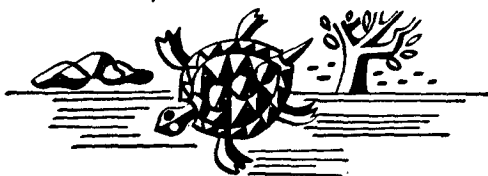
But always he went his way, sedate and sane,  
Sniffing the air to see if it might rain,  
Hunching his shoulders, hurrying his pace:  
A narrow figure, seeming to deem it treason  
To make an error life might not erase —  
To be seduced by anything but reason.

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# DOWN TO EARTH

by ALAN DEVOE

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## NATURE AND TRUTH

THERE is a grave difficulty in the way of a naturalist who wants to present the many-faceted truth of the natural world with any sort of wholeness and accurate balance. The difficulty is this: that the world of nature, when looked upon with a carefully honest attentiveness, is revealed to contain innumerable kinds of creatures, and innumerable kinds of happenings, that are not in the least lovely or reassuring, in the shallow sense in which sentimental nature-lovers demand these qualities, but that are on the contrary bloody, brutal, raw or stinking.

The chronicling of bluebirds or butterflies or the sweet hush of hemlock-woods readily wins readers' approval, for it casts upon them something of the easy spell of a child-like Eden-dream; but they are likely to avert their faces, and feel at once hurt and queasy, if they find that a nature-essay, which they had begun to read in the expectation that it would be such a gentle and assuaging idyll,

turns out to be a discussion of dung-beetles, or a study of the life-cycle of the curious animal called a liver-fluke, or an account of the tapeworms that make beef measly.

It is easiest and safest, in writing about nature, to write only about those creatures and occurrences that are universally attractive and soothing: the frolicking of rabbits in the moonlight, the happy relaxation of dappled fawns in May-time thickets, the innocent amusement of the chipmunks that scamper on old stone walls. This is easiest and safest; but it is also gravely dishonest. There is no final wisdom or profit to be derived from contemplating nature in this partial and selective way. If nature is to be contemplated at all, in any hope of acquiring a better balanced understanding of the world wherein we are incorporated, and a sounder down-to-earth philosophy of what is what, the contemplation must be full and whole. It is essential to know about the loveliness of bluebirds and wildflowers, if we are to come to any honest assay of what this earth is like. It is equally

essential to know about cutworms, and about the body louse, and about the manner in which vultures rip gobbets of flesh from rotten carcasses with their stained, hooked beaks.

It is ultimately possible, though admittedly not easy, by a full and honest examination of the world, to come to an all-acknowledging serenity. It is possible to come to see how all the creaturely ingredients of the creation — including screw-worms, tent caterpillars and the hog-nosed snake — are all in their ways operative and interacting parts of the glory of the whole. By the long route of honest-minded inquiry, there can be reached with persistence the sort of all-realizing and all-accepting adjustedness that is not greatly different from the unration-alized ecstasy of the mystics. Many and many have been the naturalists who have looked on nature, whole, and have become shouters of life-acceptance no less enthusiastic than Walt Whitman. Louis Pasteur looked very deep into that part of the natural world which spawns the bacterial creatures that sicken and kill us. He knew those organisms as intimately as sentimentalists like Dr. Henry Van Dyke chose to know, exclusively, such evidently lovely organisms as violets and slim anemones. Out of his long, deep honest watching of the world of nature, with no refusal to contemplate any part of it, Pasteur came at the end with a serene assurance of the soundness and worth of the scheme of things. "I have the faith," he said, "of a Breton fisherman."

There is a long chorus of naturalists to say the same thing in one idiom or another. Henry Thoreau looked hard and honestly into every woods-happening and field-happening he could see, turning away his face from no scene of death or blood; and he was brought to sum up his forest-findings and field-findings in the words: "I have heard no bad news." Edward Wilson, who perished with Scott in the tragic Antarctic expedition, had looked upon nature, God knows, in all the fullness of her ruthless power and killing strength; but to read the last pages of his journal, which he kept until death took him, is to find a man persuaded that all nature's particularities of pain and death are portions in a higher synthesis, a higher harmony, that becomes the flowing goodness and splendor of the whole.

It is not to be pretended that this vision is an easy one to come by. It is not to be pretended that any naturalist, who has come to entertain it, can in a few words — or in a shelf-full of books — communicate it with easy persuasion. But it is the only sort of nature-love, surely, worth having. To love nature only for her flowers and dawns, and to avert the eyes from her weevils and midnights, is in fact not to have come to the terms of life-acceptance at all. It is well to shout "Gloria!" over the scent of new-cut hay and the perfume of a blossoming honeysuckle. But it is also necessary, for any man who would honestly say he is a nature-lover and for any man who would pretend to hold a philoso-

phy that is more than a fiction, to be able to shout "Gloria!" over the smell of the pellets that owls spew up, or over the stench loosed by skunks and foxes.

## II

All this has been written because of what happened to the article which it had been intended to present in this space this month. It had been planned to write a paper upon the life-history and habits of bot flies. Bot flies (or warble flies or gad flies) are one of the most evident and abundant creatures of the countryside. Nearly all domestic beasts, and most wild mammals, are hosts to some species of bot flies. A man can hardly make even the most cursory study of deer — indeed he cannot long watch, with half an eye, even the horses or cows or sheep in the nearest pasture — without seeing red-tailed bots or throat bots or the so-called "bomb flies" (ox-warbles) that every now and then cause a herd to scatter or stampede. In any balanced chronicling of the fauna of the common countryside, a chapter clearly requires to be given to the consideration of bot flies. They would demand attention if only because of their economic significance. The common cattle bot is estimated by agricultural economists to cause an annual loss to stockmen of something like a hundred million dollars.

So an article on bots was begun, and nearly half of it written. The three commonest species — the bots respectively of horses, cattle and sheep

— were treated in exactly the same way in which scores of other kinds of creatures have been described in this department. Their life-histories were followed, from the egg-stage through the cycle to maturity and the depositing of the eggs of the next generation. May-flies have been so treated here. So have dragon-flies, butterflies, and many another.

But the habitat of bots is no such Arcadian place as a ferny glen or a brook pool, and their food is no such dainty stuff as nectar. Bots live in bodies; and they live on flesh, blood and serum. The female horse bot darts in and fastens an egg on one of the horse's hairs, commonly on the fore-leg. She darts in again; and again and again, until she has deposited perhaps five hundred eggs. The horse licks them off, swallows them; and the hatching bot-larvae are carried into the horse's stomach. They fasten themselves there, feeding and growing, for nearly a year, when they detach themselves, pass to earth in the horse's dung, and pupate. The bots of cows bore their way as larvae directly through the beasts' skins and into the connective tissue. They crawl to their host's back, and there en-nest themselves in tumorous lumps, breaking air-holes in the skin. The young of sheep-bots are deposited in sheep's nostrils. They wriggle up into the frontal sinuses and nourish themselves there for about ten months.

All this was in process of being written, the story of bot-life being told with the same intimacy with

which it has been endeavored in this place to tell the stories of beavers, herons, squirrels, raccoons and some dozens of other creatures that commonly companion us in country places.

Then there chanced to come a visitor: a friend who is at once a writer and editor, and who takes an interest in the preparation of "Down to Earth." What, he wondered, was to be the subject this month? He was told it was to be bot flies. He looked dubious. The prepared pages of typescript were passed to him. He read attentively, and he whitened.

"That can't be printed," he said. "It's disgusting."

His judgment is a good and sound one; and it was clear, immediately, that he was right. It was also clear that he was more than a little sick.

A naturalist, as said at the beginning, labors under a difficulty. He holds the conviction, right or wrong, that the creation is a good creation. He esteems it all, in all its parts, and finds no less basic wholesomeness and delight in one portion of it than in another. It has become a part of him, if he has persisted in being a naturalist for very long, to look upon the entirety of the natural world with no dismay. If he is a genuinely wholehearted naturalist, he has become, accurately speaking, rather childish.

Children do not think that earth is dirty, or that snakes are terrifying, or that there is anything horrible in the stench of a dead eel or in the fact that hawks catch meadow-mice. It is all pretty wonderful. It all goes together. It all adds up to a splendor and astonishment. With luck, a naturalist gets back to that child-view. He acquires, rationally, what children know in spontaneity, when they look on the natural world with their eyes full open, before they have learned to cast them down.

But to love nature, whole, can put a warp in the practical judgment. It can make a naturalist forget that after all a magazine was furiously attacked, and in some areas banned, a few years ago, for presenting a series of accurate photographs of the birth of a baby. The picturing of this bit of honest biology was held to be indecent. There are parts of nature not to be mentioned. There are facts not to be faced. The creation is to be admired only selectively. The universe, for our approval, must be edited.

Well. There will not be this month, or any other month, any article on bot flies. But still, to paraphrase the legendary words of Galileo, it is the fact that bot flies do throng the countryside, and they do live precisely as "Down to Earth" this month had been going fully to describe.



# THE JOE MILLER JOKE BOOK LEGEND .

BY STANLEY LICHTENSTEIN

WHEN a joke is so old "it has whiskers on it," it is often blamed on Joe Miller. That plebian name comes so easily and so frequently to people's lips, it might appear that they were familiar with the man and his works. Yet few persons now living have ever actually seen a Joe Miller joke book.

The first "Joe Miller," priced at one shilling, appeared in England in 1739, one year after Joe's death. It was thus a posthumous work. But it might also be called a "posthumorous" work, for never during his life had Joe Miller been known to utter a joke. Whatever humor he had was acquired after his death. This discrepancy between the facts of his life and the legends that grew after his death was perhaps his best — and only — joke.

One "Elijah Jenkins, Esq." was listed as the editor of the original Joe Miller joke book. As he told it, he was a friend of Joe's who had simply copied down the master's most scintillating jokes in a little black notebook he carried with him.

But there was no "Elijah Jenkins." This was the pen name adopted by John Mottley, a playwright of the

time. Mottley had, indeed, known Joe Miller, who was a well-known actor appearing in leading productions of the Drury Lane and other companies. Joe specialized in comic rôles, but he was completely devoid of any original humor of his own, and off the stage was the most solemn fellow imaginable. He was illiterate, and one contemporary observed that "his principal object in marrying was to have a wife who was able to read his lines to him."

At the Black Jack — a public house in Clare Market, London, which was Joe's favorite hangout — his cronies took to ribbing him unmercifully. Every time one told an extravagant yarn, one ascribed it to Joe. "Have you heard Joe's latest?" the story would be prefaced. "It's a knockout!" The joke would then be delivered, and even if it fell flat the audience would nevertheless roar with laughter — for all knew that the joke was on Joe Miller.

Although Joe himself was the *butt* of every one of the 247 collected jokes in the original volume, its whole point was soon lost. How could succeeding generations be expected to know of

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STANLEY LICHTENSTEIN is a free-lance writer who recently completed a study of the humor of Joe Miller. He was formerly on the staff of the New Leader.



the hoax, when even Joe's epitaph-writer lauded him as, not only "a tender husband, a sincere friend . . . and an excellent comedian," but also as "a facetious companion" excelling in "honesty and wit and humour"?

Once launched as a Jestng Spirit, there was no stopping the ghost of Joe Miller. A heavy industry had been created. Reprints, pirated editions and bigger and better Joe Millers were spawned thick and fast, and they crossed the ocean to America. The original 247 "Joes" were doubled, trebled and quadrupled in number, until, in 1834, an edition containing 1546 jokes was making the rounds. Some editors did a little pruning, however — they dropped out a number of the vintage-1739 items which were too risqué for them.

Joe Miller had heirs, too. Collections appeared with authors listed as Joe Miller the Younger, or Joe Miller, Jr., and one enterprising publisher put out a volume called *Joe Miller the Younger's Almanac for 1846*. A 1903 edition contained an index which neatly classified the witticisms from A to Z. And in 1943 a rival named Moe Miller appeared.

Mark Twain once remarked that a humorist's stuff could be considered to have lived "forever" if it lasted thirty years. He vastly underestimated the staying-power, not only of his own work, but also of the best and worst of other humorists. In 1739, for instance, *Joe Miller's Jest*s carried the following joke, No. 235:

One making a furious Assault upon a hot Apple-pye, burnt his Mouth 'till the tears ran down; his Friend asked him, Why he wept? Only, says he, 'tis just come into my Mind that my Grand-mother dy'd this Day twelvemonth: Phoo! says the other, is that all? So whipping a large Piece into his Mouth, he quickly sympathiz'd with his Companion; who seeing his Eyes brim-full, with a malicious Sneer ask'd him why he wept? A Pox on you, says he, because you were not hanged the same Day your Grand-mother dy'd.

More than two hundred years later, in 1945, Bennett Cerf's *Pocket Book of Jokes* carried the same joke (p. 109) with slight alterations. In Mr. Cerf's version, large mouthfuls of horse-radish are swallowed by an Irishman, newly-arrived in America, who thinks it is a new kind of jelly:

"What's the matter, Clancy? Why are you crying?"

Clancy didn't want to admit his mistake, and replied: "I am crying because I just thought of my poor grandfather who was hung."

By far the largest number of jokes in every Joe Miller collection have been puns. No. 131 in the 1739 edition is typical:

A Gentleman asked Nanny Rochford, why the Whigs, in their Mourning for Queen Anne, all wore Silk Stockings. Because, said she, the Tories were worsted.

No. 83:

A certain Author was telling Dr. Sewel, that a Passage he found fault with in his Poem, might be justify'd, and that he thought it a Metaphor; it is such a one, said the Doctor, as truly I never Met-afore.

No. 35 can be taken as a commentary on the book itself:

A Person was saying, not all to the Purpose, that really Sampson was a very strong Man; Ay, said another, but you are much stronger, for you make nothing of lugging him [in] by the Head and Shoulders.

# II

Certain routines seem never to lose favor. Bob Hope fans will easily recognize in the following example — “Joe Miller” joke No. 237 in the 1739 edition — the same sort of “discreet valor” which is Hope’s chief stock in trade:

A cowardly Servant having been hunting with his Lord, they had kill’d a wild Boar; the Fellow seeing the Boar stir, betook himself to a Tree; upon which his Master call’d to him and asked him, what he was afraid of, the Boar’s Guts were out? No matter for that, says he, his Teeth are in.

Another routine that will always be with us is the one about a lady’s age. In the original *Joe Miller* it was No. 99:

A Lady’s Age happening to be questioned, she affirmed she was but Forty and call’d upon a Gentleman that was in Company for his Opinion; “Cousin,” said she, “do you believe I am in the Right when I say I am but Forty?” “I ought not to dispute it, Madam,” reply’d he, “for I have heard you say so these ten years.”

Here and there, the 1739 edition contained Neat Retorts which would be worthy of the sophisticated wits of today’s Information Please radio program. Take No. 208:

A Dog coming open-mouth’d at a Serjeant upon a March, he run the Spear of his Halbert into his Throat and kill’d him: The Owner coming out rav’d extreemly that his Dog was kill’d, and ask’s the Sergeant, Why he could not as well have struck at him with the blunt End of his Halbert? So I would, says he, if he had run at me with his Tail.

Or No. 104:

Cato the Censor being ask’d how it came to pass that he had no Statue erected for him, who had so well deserv’d of the Common-Wealth? I had rather, said he, have this Question asked, than why I had one.

Among the many Americans of the last century who read Joe Miller with pleasure and profit was Abraham Lincoln. He understood the perpetual-motion machinery of the joke-mill very well, and was himself the subject of a joke book which appeared in 1864, called *Old Abe’s Jokes, Fresh from Abraham’s Bosom*. The secret of Lincoln’s success as a raconteur was timing. He had a phenomenal memory for stories, coupled with a remarkable talent for summoning them forth at exactly the right moment. A dinner guest of Lincoln’s once told him he wouldn’t beat the Confederates:

“If they get whipped they’ll retreat to them Southern swamps and bayous along with the fishes and crocodiles. You haven’t got the fish-nets made that’ll catch ‘em.” “Look here, old gentleman!” screamed old Abe, who was sitting alongside. “We’ve got just the nets for traitors, in the bayous or anywhere.” “Hey — what nets?” “*Bay-ounets!*” And Abraham pointed his joke with a fork, spearing a fishball, savagely.

Lincoln was not above using a switch on an old Joe when occasion called for it:

Old Abe was once canvassing for himself, for a local office, when he came to a blacksmith's shop. "Sir," said he to the blacksmith, "will you vote for me?" "Mr. Lincoln," said the son of Vulcan, "I admire your head, but damn your heart!" "Mr. Blacksmith," returned Abe, "I admire your candor, but damn your manners!"

This parallels No. 58 in the 1739 *Joe Miller*, concerning a well-shaped young lady, wearing a mask, who was followed by a gentleman. When she pulled off her mask at his request, and asked:

Well, Sir . . . what is it you would have with me? The Man at first Sight of her

Face, drew back, and lifting up his Hands, O! *Nothing!* Madam, *Nothing*, cry'd he; I cannot say, said my Lady, but I like your Sincerity, tho' I hate your Manners.

The title page of *Old Abe's Jokes* stated that the volume contained "All his Issues, Excepting the 'Greenbacks,' To Call in Some of Which, This Work Is Issued." Truly, this was a poetically apt idea! Lincoln brought forth his jokes just as the Government issued its Greenbacks, and some of them were never recalled — they became a part of the life of the country. The same is true of the Greenbacks issued by the "Joe Miller" editors — some of them passed into the language. Too many of them, perhaps, have never been recalled.

## PHRASE ORIGINS—21

**GUN-TURN:** *When a faro dealer draws a pair of fives out of the tell-box, professional gamblers refer to the draw as a gun-turn. The gun referred to here is not a firearm; it is a pickpocket (derived from the Yiddish word gonof, or thief), and the phrase is connected with pickpockets through an old thieves' saw which runs: "Two fives together/ What the mark had in his leather. . . ." The victim, in other words, had only two five-dollar bills in his wallet. This compound is analogous to others made with gun, such as gun-moll, gun-shirt, gun-mob, to beef gun, etc., all of which are subject to varying and usually erroneous interpretation outside the underworld.*

DAVID W. MAURER

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## THE LIBRARY

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### FORCED LABOR IN SOVIET RUSSIA<sup>1</sup>

by **BERTRAM D. WOLFE**

The Middle Ages left Russia with a heritage of torture, knout and exile. The eighteenth century abolished torture, in the nineteenth the knout was done away with, and the first day of the twentieth will be the last day of the penal system based on exile.

WITH these words the Russian delegate to the International Congress of Prison Officials held in Brussels in 1900 gave expression to a dream which had been animating all the best public servants of Tsarist Russia during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Russia, they knew, had been the last stronghold of slavery (aside from the United States and certain colonial lands) in the modern world. Forced penal labor for the profit of the state they rightly judged to be the reflection in prison of serfdom or slavery in the outside world. But in 1861 Alexander II had emancipated the serfs, even endowing

them with some land, and in 1863 Lincoln had freed the Negro slaves. Thus Russia was putting an end to the fixity or bondage (*krepost'*) which had been decreed by the enlightened autocrats, Peter and Catherine and their successors. That bondage had been primarily a military device to fix every man to his post, where the tax-gatherer and the recruiting sergeant could find him. Then had come the internal passport, the universal obligation of service to the state, the conscription of capital and labor for military industrialization. Peter the Great, Russia's foremost industrializer before the Bolsheviks, had begun by ordering "the gathering of a few thousand thieves from all over the provinces and cities" to aid in the building of his capital. Then he and his successors had added debtors, vagabonds and political malcontents. Thus the institution of penal forced labor on public works had arisen as the state's industrial counterpart of agricultural serfdom: to build ports, fortresses and roads, to work salt mines and metal mines, to clear forests, to populate the frozen north and the otherwise almost unin-

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<sup>1</sup>By David J. Dallin and Boris I. Nicolaevsky. \$3.75.  
*Yale.*

habitable wastes on the marches of the empire.

But two centuries had elapsed since then and Russia had defeated Charles XII, Frederick the Great and Napoleon. Secure against attack and expanded to her "natural frontiers," could she not now turn her resources inward for the welfare of her people, and begin the "loosening of the bonds?" Russia's conscience and the world's had been aroused by the anti-slavery societies and new humanitarian penal concepts. The last strongholds of serfdom and slavery were being broken up. Torture and conviction by confession and corporal punishment were abolished. It remained only to put an end to the anachronistic vestiges of penal servitude and forced labor in exile. Such was the basis of the optimism of the Russian delegate to the 1900 Congress of Prison Officials.

But after the revolution of 1905, there was a slight relapse. According to Andrei Vyshinski, whose services as prosecutor and purger were to make him perhaps the world's leading expert on forced labor, *katorga* (heavy penal labor) began to increase once more. By January 1, 1906, the number sentenced to *katorga* had climbed back to nearly 6000; by January 1, 1914 to almost 30,000. How enormous, how monstrous those figures seemed then: how modest, how idyllically exiguous they seem now!

The 1917 Revolution came, bearing with it a heritage of humane traditions and dreams of equality and free-

dom. "Educational institutions are to be substituted for prisons," begins a 1918 decree of the People's Commissariat of Justice. The words, *guilt*, *punishment*, *vengeance*, were deleted from the official vocabulary. The terms, *prison* and *exile* were "forever abolished." Society was to be held responsible for the criminal's criminality — poverty for his theft; illness, or chaotic social arrangements and lack of proper education and opportunity, for his acts of violence. He was to be treated as a victim in need of help, a sick man to be healed, a misfit to be redeemed and fitted into society by being taught a trade. Labor, under wholesome therapeutic conditions and with trade union rates of pay, was to be used to support him and to redeem him.

To safeguard the rights and "human dignity" of those unfortunates who had to be placed for a while in "places of social detention and rehabilitation," various rights were guaranteed to them: the right to smoke, to read, to write and receive letters, to interview relatives without the humiliation of bars between visitor and detainee, to be addressed civilly by his warders, to be fully compensated for useful labor. Chains, handcuffs, solitary confinement, torture, punishment by hunger, were abolished. Whatever the grim realities of a land in revolutionary travail, no one could deny the nobility of this new code:

Bourgeois penal policy aims at moral and physical maiming and physical destruction, achieved by means of organized

torture and violation of the human dignity of prisoners. . . . The exploitation of prison labor [production for the profit of the state rather than the use of the prisoner], the system of squeezing "golden sweat" out of them, the organization of production in places of confinement which, while profitable from a commercial point of view, is fundamentally lacking in corrective significance, is entirely inadmissible in Soviet places of confinement.

Even the dread *Cheka* (the secret political police that has since been transformed into the OGPU, the NKVD and the MVD) was originally conceived only as a temporary emergency device, and was therefore named Extraordinary [*i.e.*, Emergency] Commission to Combat Active Counter-revolution. It, too, would disappear, as soon as the counter-revolutionary armies were defeated or driven off Soviet soil.

## II

All through the twenties and early thirties, a series of political choices were made which, bit by bit, with tragic fatality, were to lead to the miscarriage of that noble dream. There was a gradual change from labor for the prisoner's use and redemption to labor for the state's profit and the prisoner's destruction: to the development of a system of "squeezing golden sweat out of them" on a scale hitherto undreamed of in the entire history of mankind, under any social system whatsoever.

Here are a few of those fatal political choices, and the reader can add to them others of a like nature:

The decision to retain the "Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-revolution" after the Counter-revolution had been beaten.

The decision to outlaw all political parties, including democratic and socialist parties, except the Communist Party.

The decision to outlaw all dissent within the Communist Party.

The decision to reduce the Soviets from parliaments of labor, to which all working class parties might send candidates, to a mouthpiece and transmission belt of the Communist Party.

The decision to determine the plowing, seeding, planting, harvesting, and disposal of the crop of the peasants, not by the inducements of industrial goods but by police methods, which required the swelling of the police apparatus into a monstrous ubiquity for coercing the overwhelming majority of the population. Inevitably, such an omnipresent police spilled over into the Soviets, the trade unions, the Communist Party, into the very Central Committee of the Party.

The decision to treat the state as coextensive and identical with the whole of society, denying all autonomy to non-state organizations, and to the individual conscience, intellect, judgment and will.

The decision to police all expressions of thought, opinion, emotion, personal life, art, science, beliefs, dreams.

The decision to "collectivize" the

peasants at a single stroke, not by persuasion and the offering of superior inducements but by police methods, and to "liquidate" as "kulaks" all who were reluctant to surrender their bit of land or cattle and all nomads who were reluctant to settle down.

The decision to industrialize the land at a tempo which would take no account of consumers' goods or strain or sacrifice, procuring the necessary "capital" by increasing the speed-up and exploitation of labor and by keeping wages at a low minimum even after the reserve army of unemployed had disappeared. The alternative to attracting workers by suitable inducements was to fix them in their jobs by force, and to decree lateness, absence from work, or voluntary change of employment a crime against the state. Thus even "free" labor became, in effect, a form of state forced labor.

The decision to treat all proposers of a different tempo or method or approach as sub-human beasts, "mad dogs," "wrecker-diversionist-spy-scum-riff-raff-fascist beasts in human form."

What wonder that this monstrous abuse of prisoners in words was accompanied by a monstrous abuse in deeds! All these decisions, and others like them, reduced man once more (to use the words Marx used in his indictment of capitalism) to "subordination to the products of his own labor, the machines." With the tying of even "free" laborers to their jobs, there came the inevitable increasing enslavement of those who had lost their

shadowy freedom. Thus, bit by bit, one of humanity's noblest dreams was converted into one of its most fearful nightmares, until the Soviet state became the greatest and most ruthless employer of slave labor that the world has ever known.

"A prison is a prison," Soviet officials now wrote:

Why such finickiness? Measures of social protection is a ridiculous term. We must overcome this sugary liberalism, this compassionate attitude toward the offender. . . . The Five-Year Plan requires tasks involving a great demand for unskilled labor. . . . It is here that the places of confinement can come to the assistance of those economic enterprises which experience a shortage of labor. . . . Incorporate the work performed by those deprived of liberty into the planned economy of the country, and into the Five-Year Plan. . . . Bring about the realization of a series of economic projects with great savings in expenditures . . . by means of the widespread use of labor of sentenced individuals. . . . The following are objects of mass labor best fitted for the realization of the purposes of corrective labor: large-scale industrial construction (factories, dams, dikes, blast-furnaces, railroads, etc.) . . . irrigation works; highway construction. . . .

### III

Only one problem remained to be solved. Historically, slave labor was one of the most inefficient forms of labor and scarcely yielded more than enough to sustain the slave. But, as Stalin has more than once observed, "nothing is impossible to Bolshevik determination." The solution lay along two lines. First there was the fact that unlike private chattel



slaves who cost their owners money, state slaves can be recruited without cost, and it does not matter how soon they are worked to death. The second line of solution was that which had been worked out in regard to "free" labor: the norm, the wage insufficient to sustain life for those who cannot or will not reach the norm, and the incentive system of extra rations or extra compensation for those model or speed-up workers who exceed the norm. In the prison camps and places of exile, the compelling argument of the club, the dog and the gun was supplemented by a system of regulated starvation and feeding according to norms, fixed neither by the feeble health nor the feeble zeal of the prisoner, but by the will and plans of the state.

The change was made only gradually and, to do the Soviet leaders justice, at first only with reluctance. The outside world, even as it was so long unwilling to believe that the Nazis could set up genocidal crematoria in the "enlightened twentieth century" and in the land of "German culture," has been reluctant to believe that slave labor could become an essential part of the economic structure of a land which "has abolished all exploitation of man by man." Still less would admirers of a "planned economy in a planless world" believe that planned recruiting of prisoners and planned forcing of their labor was an essential part of the Plan. Or an essential political foundation stone in "Soviet economic democracy."

The Soviet Union is the only great nation in the world which does not publish penal statistics. It ceased publication of these figures in 1931, the year that the Anti-Slavery Society in England made an inquiry into the conditions of the Soviet camps. The results of this investigation, which was undertaken in a careful and objective manner by Allan Pim and Edward Bateson, were published as the *Report on the Russian Timber Camps*. Unfortunately a number of timber and manganese companies and certain boards of trade attempted to take advantage of the report by advocating embargoes on Soviet imports. As a result, the numerous friends of the Soviet Union, as well as the millions who refused to open their minds to the possibility that such horrors existed, were enabled to stamp the report as the contrived invention of vested economic interests.

In 1935 Vladimir Tchernavin's moving personal record of his servitude and escape, *I Speak for the Silent*, was published. By this time American intellectuals had been so shocked by our depression that all too many of them longed to believe that somewhere in an imperfect world there was rational planning, real security and a social organization capable of producing abundance. Tchernavin's cry fell on deaf ears.

During the war, the more sensitive were occasionally shocked for moments by casual side remarks in the most ardently pro-Soviet books: remarks like Quentin Reynolds' in

*Only the Stars Are Neutral*, in which he described a ragged, hopeless battalion of 800 convict women he had witnessed marching to forced labor; like Walter Kerr's in *Russia's Red Army*, concerning the apathetic reception of lend-lease goods in Murmansk by the slave laborers functioning as longshoremen; like Wendell Willkie's declaration in the pre-publication serialization of *One World*: "Between the airfield and the town of Yakutsk we looked for the usual concentration camp, but there was none or at least we never came across it." (Significantly, this tell-tale sentence was omitted when *One World* was published in book form, for there was the will to believe that all concentration camps, torture systems, police state and totalitarian features were in the opposing camp and not in the camp of our own "United Nations.")

It remained for the citizens of another united nation, Poland, to make the fearful journey "to the dark side of the moon" and, unexpectedly, by a turn of fate, to return with reports on the fate of the submerged and the damned. When the Stalin-Hitler pact partitioned Poland in 1939, from Russia's portion over a million men, women and children, including all possible bearers of the idea of a free Poland, were driven in sealed freight cars or on foot, into distant places of exile and concentration camps in Siberia's wastes and frozen north.

There they found that they were not being punished as Poles but as people who did not fit into the reasons

and plans of the Soviet state, for they found there Russians and members of all the nationalities in the great family of Soviet nations. Their wet clothes turned to rags as they worked in the snow and ice; bodies and spirits were broken; ulcers, scurvy, pneumonia, tuberculosis, hunger, exhaustion, despair, took their frightful toll as they worked to exhaustion and early death under brutalized guards, fierce trained dogs, the lash and the gun. Why waste them? the State reasoned, even as it had already learned to reason concerning its own peasants resisting collectivization, nomads resisting a planned sedentary existence, officials convicted of inefficiency, or corruption, or heresy, or mere friendship with other convicted officials. Why waste them, when it saves powder and lead and yields a profit to the state to keep their skin and bones together until they are worked to exhaustion? Why use the wasteful death penalty when in a few years they will be worked to death anyhow?

But then a miracle happened. The partners who, in 1939, had formed their partnership over the prostrate body of Poland, fell out with each other in June 1941. Now Stalin, needing Polish military manpower, and above all needing the support of Britain, which had gone to war precisely over the invasion and partition of Poland, agreed to let General Sikorski and a British parliamentary commission recruit an army among the ragged, vermin-ridden, ulcerated

and pallid ghosts who still eked out their existence in the land of the damned. How frightful the toll had been was proved by the pitiful remnant, numbering a few hundred thousand, that could be nursed back to health, out of the more than a million which the International Labor Office statistical report had recorded as having gone into deportation.

Now the harrowing record was made available in countless documents, personal narratives and piteous tales. They told not only of themselves but of the other shadows that would never return to the land of the living. Through the account distilled from innumerable narratives and set down with painful restraint in such books as *The Dark Side of the Moon* (written anonymously) and *La Justice Soviétique* (by Sylvester Mora and Peter Zwierniak) we get some conception of the number of concentration camps, their geographical distribution and activities, the conditions obtaining in them. It would take a new Dante to do real justice to this modern inferno, yet this collective account, derived from thousands of letters, diaries, conversations, documents and reports is the distillation of the anguish and agony of an entire people.

An intolerably painful book for us to read, *The Dark Side of the Moon* must be read, every word of it, by any who would attempt to influence the history of our time. For, as the brief and sober preface of T. S. Eliot points out:

This is not merely the story of what happened to Poland and to innumerable Poles between 1939 and 1945. . . . It is also a book about the USSR, about the Europe in which we now live, about the world in which we now live.

#### IV

*Forced Labor in Soviet Russia*, by Dallin and Nicolaevsky is a more illuminating, less emotionally shattering, study of the same subject in all its ramifications. It is the first systematic and scholarly examination of all the documents available, all the eye-witness accounts, all the meaningful fragments of Soviet comment, of the history and social significance of that "peculiar institution" which has become a cornerstone of Soviet polity and economic life. Here the reader will find the carefully reasoned and documented answers to his shocked and incredulous: *Why?* He will find the historical background from which I have drawn in part for the opening section of this review article. He will find a map locating all known concentration camps; a careful breakdown of the various industries in which they are engaged; an economic analysis of why human flesh is substituted for machinery in certain types of construction and production; a careful collation, erring only on the side of understatement, of the statistical evidence on the numbers of millions involved; a digest of all eye-witness reports and accounts of participants from Tchernavin to the Poles and the latest returning Russian war-prisoners and displaced persons; a

study of the fabulous rise of Magadan, capital of a Slave Empire; pen portraits of the principal architects of the system — in short, an analysis of all available material, fitted into a systematic exposition.

With admirable patience and skill the authors have slowly put together, over a period of more than a decade, the tiny bits of evidence from Soviet sources, put them together like fragments of an ancient mosaic of which many parts may still be missing but of which all the outlines are already clear. They have preferred to let Soviet records and Soviet spokesmen speak for themselves, citing date and page and verifiable source. The book contains 32 photostats of actual documents of GULAG (the Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps, Prisons, Labor and Special Settlements of the NKVD), and the photostat of a page of instructions for the seizure and deportation of all Lithuanian leaders, trade union, socialist, democratic, economic, political and cultural, the originals of which are on file with the International Red Cross at Geneva, and microfilm copies of which are in the New York Public Library.

Dallin and Nicolaevsky have thus produced the first definitive study of slave labor as a cornerstone of Soviet economy, and the first general theoretical analysis of its social, political and economic meaning. It is the Soviet government's own fault if they have had to guess at the total figures involved. Their figures, advanced with

excessive caution, reveal a slave class running well above the ten-million mark, more numerous than the total number of workers under Tsarism who were to be emancipated in 1917, more numerous, too, than the total number of male "free" workers in industry today!

As Dallin earlier made clear in his *The Real Soviet Russia*, this class of slaves is today the most numerous productive class in Soviet society, situated at the bottom of the social pyramid, unreached even by the shadowy paper constitution and bill of rights, devoid of all rights whatsoever, planfully exploited to the point of exhaustion and annihilation. Yet — a significant and essential part of this peculiar planned economy — it is in need of being continuously replaced by the creation and "recruiting" of new groups and classes of heretics, dissenters, criminals, "class-alien" or "national-alien" or "enemy-alien" bodies of men.

As has been the case wherever a numerous class of slaves, private or state, exists alongside of poor freemen, the latter inevitably begin to feel the pressure of the slave system in lowered remuneration and lessened freedom. It was the existence of this growing class of slaves throughout the thirties that made it possible for the Russian state to reintroduce the internal passport, fixity in factory and farm, the conscription of youth for labor, the conversion of trade unions from protective agencies to speed-up agencies, and the gradual blurring of the un-

certain boundaries between the various degrees of unfreedom.

If *I Speak for the Silent* and *The Dark Side of the Moon* correspond to the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of the new anti-slavery movement that is bound to develop in our time, then Dallin and Nicolaevsky have produced the study of the Bradleys, the Wilberforces and the Hinton Helpers.

And they have provided a touchstone to test every new book and reporter and lecturer on Russia: if he has nothing to say on this essential foundation-stone in the Soviet structure then his book is either ignorant or dishonest. One can no more talk about the Russian working class henceforward without discussing the millions of its slave producers than one could talk about production in the Old South without mentioning chattel slavery, or about labor in the New South without mentioning Jim Crow. And anyone who has nothing to say

about this dehumanization of millions of human beings can henceforth be regarded neither as a liberal, a democrat, a humanitarian nor a socialist.

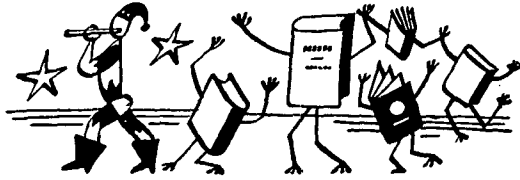
Thus this book is a must for everyone who would understand Russia and the history of our time. It teaches us what the régime of "economic democracy" is like. It provides the missing key to many enigmas such as the unwillingness of the Russian rulers to permit observers to travel freely through their land; their refusal even to accept America's gift of international control of atomic energy. (How, indeed, could they accept a control that is tied up with freedom of movement and freedom of inspection in a land that is dotted with hundreds of concentration camps containing millions of toilers?) Thus, Dallin and Nicolaevsky have written what will surely become one of the key books of our time.



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## THE CHECK LIST

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### HISTORY

I REMEMBER DISTINCTLY, *A Family Album of the American People in the Years of Peace: 1918 to Pearl Harbor*, assembled by Agnes Rogers, with running comment by Frederick Lewis Allen. \$5.00. *Harper*. Mr. and Mrs. Allen have once again produced an excellent picture-comment book. They cover every aspect of American life — economic, political, theatrical, literary, journalistic, military, educational, humorous. The Wilson-Harding-Coolidge-Hoover-Roosevelt eras pass before one's eyes quickly, pleasantly, sometimes painfully. Perhaps the most truly American picture in the entire book appears on page 18; it shows a dapper Mr. Harry S. Truman standing between two show cases in a Kansas City haberdashery store, which he ran from 1919 to 1923 (and not with conspicuous success) in partnership with Ed Jacobson. Mr. Allen's comments are what they should be: clear and objective.

OUR LUSTY FOREFATHERS, by Fairfax Downey. \$4.50. *Scribner*. The subtitle of this book reads: "Being diverse chronicles of the fervors, frolics, fights, festivities, and failings of our American ancestors." The general thesis of the book is that "our forefathers drank deep, ate hearty and lived lustily." Mr. Downey has little difficulty in proving his thesis from the records — and with the aid of some fictionizing that seems not very necessary. He is not above literary smacking of the lips and he dredges up his "discoveries" with boyish relish. The need for such a book at this late date is problematical. The "debunkers" of the twenties went over this ground pretty thoroughly — and many of them are now wondering whether, in their quest for "juicy

stuff" about our ancestors, they did not lose sight of more worthy and more enduring material. There are several illustrations by John C. Wonsler; they are in keeping with the text.

FOREIGN MUD, by Maurice Collis. \$5.00. *Knopf*. Like Mr. Collis' previous book, *The Land of the Great Image*, this volume on the Anglo-Chinese Opium War is interesting chiefly for the fascinating material it brings to light on pre-imperialist oriental civilization. Although Mr. Collis is certainly no apologist for British imperialism, he thinks that the British were rather less wicked than most of us had supposed. They were subjected to innumerable provocations from a Chinese bureaucracy that represented neither the Emperor nor the people. The British, he says, would have preferred free trade with China to a war; and they would have preferred to export their own industrial products rather than opium.

DREYFUS TO PÉTAIN, by William Herzog. \$3.50. *Creative Age*. This volume is concerned mainly with the Dreyfus affair, of which it provides a vivid and readable account. The passages on more recent French history, however, are full of Party-line reporting. Mr. Herzog fails to mention, for example, in his treatment of the collaborationist Jacques Doriot, that this man had formerly been one of the top leaders of the French Communist Party. Nor is there any mention of the defeatist part played by the Communists during the early stages of the war. Mr. Herzog sees the coming world struggle primarily in terms of a battle between Communism and Catholicism.

IT TAKES ALL KINDS, by Lloyd Lewis. \$3.75. *Harcourt, Brace*. This is a collection of Mr.

Lewis' magazine and newspaper articles, some of them from *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*. They deal with old and charming gaffers, eminent military characters, poets, prize-fighters, theatrical folk, baseball heroes and authors. All of them make enjoyable reading, all of them are effectively written, and all of them were well worth preserving between boards. Mr. Lewis is that rare phenomenon, a first-rate journalist who is also an excellent historian. More, he is that even rarer phenomenon in the contemporary American literary scene: a man with a great respect for the English language.

## MUSIC

*THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RECORD*, by Charles O'Connell. \$3.50. Knopf. Mr. O'Connell was for twenty years musical director of the artists and repertoire department of the RCA-Victor Corporation, and since 1944 he has been musical director of the Columbia Masterworks. Here he lets off steam after years of being "bored, irritated, and sometimes infuriated by the endless stream of cheap and incredible nonsense" that has been published as information or criticism in this country. He has probably known all the great, both real and bogus, in the current musical world, and his opinion of them, with few exceptions, was far from high. The late Grace Moore impressed him as a superficial, "confused child," with few worthy values, with no real love for music, and a pushover for all manner of phonies. Lily Pons' voice is good, but her publicity sense is perhaps greater, and surely, according to Mr. O'Connell, her husband, Andre Kostelanetz, who reveals very little about his musical past, is a better money-maker than a conductor. What Mr. O'Connell says about Toscanini will amaze most people. Toscanini, it seems, has little tenderness, barely knows a thing of world literature, is extremely limited in his musical tastes, and altogether is "as simple, as selfish, and as savage as a child." Messrs. Koussevitzky and Stokowski fare much better at Mr. O'Connell's hands. He thinks that they are at least as able as Toscanini and that the Philadelphia and Boston Orchestras are superior to the New York Philharmonic. Mr. O'Connell reveals that Toscanini did not appeal much to audiences, at least towards the end of his

career at the Philharmonic. Near the end of the volume Mr. O'Connell laces into the "self-conscious sophisticates and simpering sycophants whom Olin Downes regards as 'the élite'" among audiences. Altogether, a highly readable, and at times very shrewd and profound book by a musician who writes with great power and clarity.

*COMPOSERS IN AMERICA*, by Claire R. Reis. \$5.00. Macmillan. This is a revised and enlarged edition of one of the best music reference books available. Arranged alphabetically, it gives all the important information about all major and most minor composers who flourished in America during the past 32 years. Mrs. Reis, in each case, begins with a brief but very useful biographical sketch and follows it with a detailed description of the composer's works: the full title, the duration of playing, the name of the publisher or a notation that it is still in manuscript, and the date of composition. There are also notes about recordings and radio performances.

*SHOSTAKOVICH, The Man and His Work*, by Ivan Martynov. \$3.75. Philosophical Library. Mr. Martynov is a Moscow musicologist who has only good to say about his subject, both as a composer and as a man. He calls him "master," and he has barely a word of criticism to say about any of his works. He says the Fifth Symphony is full of "human quality and truthfulness," whatever that may be, and he almost is beside himself with praise for "the heroic quality" of the Seventh Symphony, that most fraudulent of all fraudulent Russian musical works. Mr. Martynov also delivers himself of this nonsense: "Shostakovich's . . . works . . . have endeared him to the entire world. This can readily be explained by the fact that the strivings of Soviet culture are interlaced with those of all progressive mankind." The translation is by T. Guralsky.

## BIOGRAPHY

*AMERICAN MEMOIR*, by Henry Seidel Canby. \$5.00. Houghton Mifflin. The first two sections of this volume are somewhat revised versions of two previous books, *The Age of Confidence* and *Alma Mater*. The third and new section



is entitled *Brief Golden Age*, and carries Dr. Canby's autobiography through the twenties and early thirties, when he was editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature* and became chairman of the board of judges of the Book-of-the-Month Club. While Dr. Canby is not the liveliest of writers, he reveals himself here as a man of many shrewdnesses and one who never fell for such nonsense as proletarian literary criticism, the extreme forms of Gertrude Steinism, or the photographic hocus-pocus of John Dos Passos. Neither did Dr. Canby, to his credit, ever succumb to the "sex freedom" blarney of the more sensational critics. He knew that so-called sex restrictions have seldom hindered the first-rate writer — that, indeed, they have often saved him from his worst faults. Dr. Canby's section on the Book-of-the-Month Club and its value to American literature will hardly enhance his reputation as an acute and courageous literary historian; he leaves out too much. But the book as a whole is valuable, occasionally amusing, and often quite penetrating.

WILSON, *The Road to the White House*, by Arthur S. Link. \$5.00. Princeton. This is the first in a many-volumed study of President Wilson, and if the succeeding volumes are as judicious, as fully documented, and as well written as this one, the completed project will doubtless form a milestone in American biography. In the present volume, Dr. Link, who is a member of the history department of Princeton University, deals roughly with the years 1902-1912, which include Wilson's terms as president of Princeton and Governor of New Jersey, his nomination by the Democrats for President of the United States, and his vigorous campaign and election. Dr. Link points out that Wilson began pretty much as a conservative and that his liberalism was a rapid but fairly permanent growth. Despite his "vagaries and hedges, he had emerged as the present heir of the great populist-Bryan tradition, which was in turn the child of a deep-rooted American faith in democracy, equality of opportunity, humanitarian reform, and fair play." There are an excellent bibliography and a magnificent index. Readers of THE AMERICAN MERCURY will recall with pleasure Dr. Link's excellent article, "The Enigma of Woodrow Wilson," in the September issue.

THE ASSAULT, by Allen R. Matthews. \$2.50. Simon & Schuster. Despite its belated appearance, this slim volume should take its place among the better narratives of front-line warfare. The author, a former reporter with the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, fought with the Marines on Iwo Jima until midway through the struggle for the island, when he was evacuated in a state of complete exhaustion. His account, which flashes back from this point, deals with the terror, grime, heroism and humor of war in a cool, passionless fashion which heightens the tension of the action. One of three survivors of his original platoon, Matthews himself was never hit, nor did he repel a banzai charge or storm a pill-box single-handed. Rather, his book relates the petty day-to-day miseries, dirt and fatigue of the slow campaign for Iwo. Conspicuously missing, too, are the customary gripes about bad food, martinets, etc.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OPERATION MOSCOW, by Christopher Norborg. \$3.50. Dutton. Dr. Norborg's book, one chapter of which has appeared in THE AMERICAN MERCURY, contains one of the most intelligent appraisals of Communist aims and tactics that has emerged in some time. He believes that the western nations committed an inexcusable series of blunders in making so many concessions at Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam; and that only the accident of our discovering the atomic bomb prevented Stalin from converting the war into a great Communist assault on the west. However, he says that the bomb can never "become a big stick for Soviet or any other aggressive unilateralism. The retaliation upon future aggressors would be instant and absolute." There is also a penetrating discussion of the basic philosophical and religious issues at stake.

GERMANY—BRIDGE OR BATTLEGROUND, by James P. Warburg. \$3.50. Harcourt, Brace. Mr. Warburg presents here what has come to be known as the "liberal" interpretation of recent German history. He believes that the Allies were largely responsible for throttling German democracy after the last war and that they have already gone far toward repeating their errors this time. He regards the Morgenthau plan

## FICTION

and the Potsdam agreement as two serious blunders by American planners; both of them, he says, have been outdated by subsequent events, and we should eliminate them from our future thinking about Germany. Unfortunately, most of Mr. Warburg's own program seems to have been written on the assumption that the Russians are prepared to cooperate with us in establishing a non-Communist Germany. This section of his book, as well as his argument against a "western bloc" in Europe, appears to have less relevance since the Marshall plan was announced.

## ANTHOLOGIES

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *His Life, Work and Character***, edited by Edward Wagenknecht. \$4.00. *Creative Age*. This is a collection of Lincoln pieces in almost every form of writing: history, biography, drama, fiction, essay and poetry. Such old standbys as William E. Barton, Albert J. Beveridge and Carl Sandburg are here, all of them, of course, good, but there are also some dubious pieces by Betty Smith, Milton Waldman, Richard Watson Gilder and John Drinkwater, to mention only a few in this class. The book does not reveal a high order of judgment on the part of the editor. There is a difference between a good anthology and a grab-bag.

**A TREASURY OF MEXICAN FOLKWAYS**, by Frances Toor. \$5.00. *Crown*. It would probably be impossible to overpraise this volume. It is a veritable encyclopedia on Mexico, covering every aspect of life in that land. Miss Toor, who is professor of folklore at the University of Mexico, knows her subject as few others, if any, know it. But she knows Mexico not merely intellectually but emotionally. When she writes about Mexican music and poetry and sculpture and painting, she does so not merely out of a vast fund of learning, but with love. When she writes about Mexican society and working methods she does so with profound scholarship but also with affectionate understanding. The superb text is illustrated with ten color plates, 100 drawings by Carlos Merida and 165 photographs. There are many notes, a good bibliography, a glossary and a fair index. Altogether a book that will probably be consulted and read for many decades to come.

**CLARKTON**, by Howard Fast. \$2.75. *Duell, Sloan & Pearce*. There is nothing in this novel to startle anyone familiar with Mr. Fast's previous record as a Stalinist sob-sister. The story, which takes place in December 1945, revolves around a strike in Clarkton, a small New England factory town. The owner of the struck factory is a weak-willed wretch named George Clark Lowell. To end the strike, Lowell brings in one Hamilton Gelb, a professional strikebreaker with a long record of atrocities against the common people. Gelb, who realizes that the Communist Party is the vanguard of the working class, sets out to undermine the local Party organization, first by offering bribes (which are rejected with disdain), then by having the local police rough up two Party men. Eventually, these tactics provoke a mass demonstration by the workers in which two of them are shot. All of this leaves the Communists pretty much undaunted; Lowell, however, goes very quickly to pieces. In the space of the four days covered by the novel he gets gonorrhea, assaults his son's girl friend, loses all control over his family and finally lapses into morbid drinking. When he turns for sympathy to an old boyhood friend (who is now a Communist), he gets nothing but a stiff lecture on politics and morals. The strike remains unsettled; the class struggle goes on!

**MRS. CANDY AND SATURDAY NIGHT**, by Robert Tallant. \$2.50.  *Doubleday*. Mr. Tallant has threaded a light story around Mrs. Candy and the people in her boarding house. The house, bequeathed to her by her late husband, is on a street located in a friendly, noisy, inelegant section of New Orleans. Mrs. Candy is a robust landlady who has an avid interest in the affairs of her boarders and treats everyone with a cheerful, vulgar kindness. During the 24 hours covered by the book, two of her roomers get married, another couple falls in love and Mrs. Candy sets her own somewhat blousy cap for her newest lodger. But the charm of the book lies in the vivid delineation of the characters. None of them is good or bad. There is no moral, but the tale is adorned with wit and humor. A note of melodrama at the end seems out of place, however.

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## THE OPEN FORUM

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(Continued from page 517)

pulling off his fingernails and then warming him up with a blowtorch. Then they were going to carve him up into nice juicy shred and feed him to their darling little quadrupeds. Now Mr. Jones says that his noble great dane "could make a nice red hole where his [Evans'] throat used to be on the word 'attack.'" . . .

Our town here has belatedly legislated animals off the streets. And this seems to be better for both man and beast.

CHARLES W. AMLIN

South Pasadena, Cal.

### HYDROPHOBIA

SIR: May I make a very belated comment on the interesting exchange of letters between Father Brockman and Bergen Evans anent the derivation of the word *hydrophobia*. It is true that the word is ultimately a Greek compound, but Father Brockman forgets that there was a very extensive incorporation of Greek words into the language of Rome, especially from the time of Augustus until the end of the Vulgar Latin period. They were very numerous and popular even in the classic period. Commerce, navigation and artisans furnished a large number of common interests between Greece and Rome. Religion furnished another large group. And a third group, words having to do with the medical and pharmaceutical language, continued the wave of borrowings.

*Hydrophobia* in its Roman spelling is to be found in the works of Coelius Aurelianus, who died in 409 A.D. It appears in the *Epistolae ex Ponto* of Ovid in the Augustan period. *Hydrophobicus* (relating to hydrophobia) is used by Coelius, and *hydrophobus* (meaning afflicted by hydrophobia) was used by Pliny. In this same class are *hydropicus*, which was known to Horace,

*hydropisis*, used by Pliny, and *hydropismus*, again by Coelius. It is interesting to note that Pliny uses *hypochisis*, meaning a cataract in the eye, while *hypochyma*, with the same meaning was employed by Marcellus Empiricus, who died about 400 A.D.

Mr. Evans is entirely correct in stating that the word *hydrophobia* comes to us directly from the Latin.

ARTHUR B. MYRICK

Burlington, Vt.

### CAESAR'S POSTHUMOUS CAREER

SIR: I am not a subscriber to your magazine, but now and again I pick it up at a bookstore and read it.

I came upon some paragraphs written by Mr. Bergen Evans in his "Skeptics' Corner" in the August issue. Writing on "caesarean section" he gave us this gem. "Caesar has had a strange posthumous career. The public dearly loves to exalt its heroes. Associated as his name was with the grandeur of Rome he came, in medieval legend, to be considered a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church and had a bishopric conferred upon him." Brother, that is a "whopper"! As he expressed it, the Catholic Church made Julius Caesar a Bishop after he was dead ten or twelve centuries or more. He must have felt this "posthumous dignity" deeply. The Catholic Church does not make pagans Bishops, much less dead men.

After a little reflection, I began to get a faint glimmer of what he intended to write. He was undoubtedly thinking of the city of Caesarea. There are several cities by that name but they are not anywhere near Rome (though they may have belonged at one time, to the Roman Empire). These places, doubtless, were named after Julius

Caesar, and if there is a bishopric in any of them, the "see" adopted the name of the town.

I cannot understand for the life of me what Mr. Evans' second paragraph had to do with "caesarean section."

F. A. BROCKMAN  
Sacred Heart Church

McAllen, Tex.

SIR: Father Brockman need not go to such trouble to disavow purchasing the MERCURY. It's no disgrace to pay for what you read.

Lest in his glimmerings he attribute any more such fantasies to me, let me make myself clear by repeating what I said: *in medieval legend* Caesar was made a bishop. The Middle Ages were notoriously vague in historical matters. Chaucer represents Theseus as a duke and in some illustrations Christ himself is represented as carrying a knight's pennant, it being assumed that anyone of any distinction was a knight. Caesar was not the only man so transmogrified. Let Father Brockman step into the bookstore again and pick up a copy of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* and read how George of Cappadocia became St. George of Merry England.

The second paragraph continued the idea of the first—the strange stories that gathered around Julius Caesar after his death. We must continually remind ourselves of what incredible nonsense has passed for fact and history in the past, often under the most solemn assurances, in order to be alert in the presence of fact, history and solemn assurances today.

BERGEN EVANS

Evaston, Ill.

## A NOTE ON WINE

SIR: After reading in your June number Mr. Evans' statement, "From the moment wines are sealed in glass bottles all change for the better ceases — and they are usually not put into bottles until the full advantages of aging have been achieved," I have become skeptical of "The Skeptics' Corner."

Obviously Mr. Evans is confusing wine with whisky, with which he is perhaps more familiar. The change in distilled liquors in corked bottles, it is true, is so slow as to be negligible. Wine, however, continues to be a living organism even after bottling, and changes over a long period of time, first for the better and then for the worse. White wines mature with relative rapidity, but the great French red wines are aged in the wood up to four

years. After that, for the first few years in bottle, they are rather hard, but improve at a rate that varies with the vintage. Experts attempt to prophesy how many years a given wine will take to reach its prime, but the only way to be sure is to try it. A great red wine is generally at its best after ten or fifteen years in the bottle. But that from the old French vines which escaped the phylloxera epidemic of the eighties, and had not, in consequence, been grafted with American vines, could be kept, under favorable cellar conditions and preferably in magnums, up to sixty years or more. The finest wine I ever drank was a Chateau Lafite 1865 which, after sixty years in its magnums, was in perfect condition.

Mr. Evans' comment is a notable contribution to the widespread ignorance of wine in the United States.

HAROLD ENGLISH

Hollywood, Cal.

SIR: Information furnished me since the publication of the June issue by the Wine Institute and by the Division of Viticulture of the University of California, plus Mr. English's eloquence and record of his experiences, has convinced me that "all change for the better ceases" is wrong. Though oxidation ceases, esterification continues and, in the opinion of the majority of experts, this improves the wine.

What I should have said is that a wine is not necessarily good because it is old and its quality does not improve indefinitely with age and that in time any wine will spoil. The cobweb-encrusted bottles of fiction and the movies, taken from crypts sealed before the memory of man, would be more likely to delight the prankster than the gourmet.

Anyway, Mr. English is right. *Mea culpa!* Score one for the observant reader and, as *Time* would say, a thoroughgoing rebuke to my research staff, namely myself.

BERGEN EVANS

Evaston, Ill.

## ORGANIZED RELIGION

SIR: Osmond K. Kunze's protest [in the September "Soap Box"] at the dominance and intolerance of "organized religion" is timely and to the point. He evidently means Christianity rather than religion in general, for other religions than Christianity make us no trouble.

The recent trend of Christian intolerance becomes historically all the more striking when one realizes that for the first hundred years of this

republic — from Washington to Garfield — the citizens did not elect to the Presidency a communicant of any orthodox church, while many of the nineteen Presidents of this period were outspoken freethinkers.

Why the change? Simply because of the change of the press from an instrument of news and education to a mere device for the sale of advertising. Few if any newspapers or magazines today dare print the truth about the church.

IRA D. CARDIFF

Yakima, Wash.

## “INSIDE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH”

SIR: I looked in vain for a wheeze from Philip Wylie in the September issue of “The Soap Box,” but I understand he is now spending most of his time posting hurt little notes to *Life* — which left you with contributions a bit below his eloquent level. Take that one from Missouri [by Osmond K. Kunze]: “Can you imagine a free-thinker being elected President of the United States?” (Certainly I can imagine it; it has happened in some other countries, countries whose other conspicuous characteristic is the slave-labor camp, an institution quite at home in a state whose head owes no allegiance higher than his morning salute to his almighty self.) Or take the one from Washington [by Thomas F. Monahan]: “I hear from reliable sources that in the past two years 3000 Catholics in the East became Methodists — one of the converts being a former Catholic bishop.” Or take that one from Minnesota [by Orson D. B. Metcalf]: “The great New York or Chicago or San Francisco papers . . . are all afraid of what the vast propaganda machine of the Catholic Church will do to them.”

Herewith my good deed for the day: to save you the monotony of turning over half your department each month to these honest, alert, inquiring thinkers with an over-supply of postage stamps, this item, “Inside the Catholic Church,” can be used.

Item: It is not true that the Pope has mobilized in the city of Boston an army of purple-shirted youths numbering close to 200,000, who are awaiting orders to march on Washington in the wake of the coming economic collapse now being engineered by Catholic industrialists and Catholic labor-leaders. . . .

Item: Catholics are not permitted to eat their young. In fact, on Fridays they are *forbidden* to do so.

Item: It is not true that Msgr. Sheen has Adolf

Hitler alive and locked in the library at Catholic University, converting him to Catholicism. The prisoner is actually W. Somerset Maugham, and his conversion will probably hit page one.

Item: It is not true that the average parish priest realizes between seven and eight thousand dollars in “sin-money” paid him by penitents going to Confession. In the largest metropolitan parish the gross hardly ever exceeds four thousand — and this only during the Easter Season.

Item: Nuns haven’t put ground glass in their shoes since 1930, when some of the glass was discovered to have come from Schenley bottles. Since then double-edged razor blades have been prescribed instead.

Item: It is not true that the Catholic Church wants to commandeered all public school buses to convert them to mobile Bingo halls. I honestly do not know *what* we want them for; my direct wire to Rome was staticky this past month and my instructions were delayed while being re-routed through Madrid and Buenos Aires. Incidentally, Evita’s peroxide is only of the secular variety. You can get it yourself at any drugstore.

Item: Catholics do not adore statues nor take their pastors with them on honeymoons, nor are they awaiting the Second Coming of Al Smith.

But, dammit, what they are awaiting is one — just one — intelligent objection to the Church on the *doctrinal* level. So Perón makes the sign of the Cross! Hell, one of the Original Twelve was a Judas.

And would to God that all those alert, inquiring Protestants who have grown up reading Maria Monk would spend just a few of their adult hours on Reinhold Niebuhr (to take one example) — a thinking Protestant they will not discover contributing to very many Soap Boxes.

B. G. GALLAGHER

Lancaster, Pa.

## A STATISTICAL CORRECTION

SIR: Stephen Naft’s article in the September AMERICAN MERCURY on “Perón: Fascism’s Newest Face” has an arithmetical “bull” of a type that is becoming epidemic. Of corn sold for \$8.40 that had cost \$2.40 the profit is called 350 per cent. A day or two before a columnist told his newspaper audience that a 28 per cent increase in prices had cut the purchasing power of the dollar to 72 cents. The executive of the National Education Association told the world that a 1947 cost four times as high as an earlier cost had increased 400 per cent.

Since our postwar world requires adults to think in terms of percentage changes, it is important that our minds be trained to see automatically that an increase of anything to four times its initial size is an increase of 300, not 400, per cent; that when prices go up 28 per cent the dollar's power drops to 78, not 72, cents; and that when Argentine corn jumps from \$2.40 to \$8.40 per hundred kilograms the profit is 250, not 350, per cent.

WILLIAM H. ALLEN

*New York City*

SIR: Mr. Allen is perfectly correct in pointing out the arithmetical error in the statement: an increase in the price of corn from \$2.40 to \$8.40 is 250, rather than 350, per cent. I am perfectly well aware of this. The slip was due to a typographical error.

I do not think, however, that the slip was so tragic, nor that it detracts from the general value of the article.

STEPHEN NAFT

*New York City*

## THE BUTTER TRUST

SIR: Congratulations and hearty thanks for publishing the article "Butter Vs. Margarine" by Hubert A. Kenny, which appeared in the August AMERICAN MERCURY. It is high time that more people of these United States were introduced to the selfish interests which have brought about this indefensible discrimination against oleomargarine.

Mr. Kenny did an excellent job of exposing the various methods employed by the butter trust. One scheme which I have observed during recent years in California involves referring all bills attempting to remove this discrimination to the legislative committee on livestock and dairies. You can well imagine the kiss of death which such bills receive from the lips of solons primarily responsible for the production of milk, cream and butter in California.

While crossing the country last month I was greatly impressed with the growing consumer attitude toward the agricultural interests. It looks as though the next time the farm leaders need to appear before Congress with hat in hand, they may receive a chilly reception. Consumers have

long memories, even though they are not organized, and they will not soon forget the farmer's contribution to the High Cost of Living.

ROBERT S. MONAHAN

*West Warwick, R. I.*

## TERM MARRIAGES

SIR: Mr. Mel Brooks' suggested remedy for ailing marriages [see "The Soap Box" in the September MERCURY] seems to come straight out of the pages of le Maréchal de Saxe's *Réveries* (1732). But where Mr. Brooks believes in the institution and suggests asepsis, le Maréchal was offering a remedy for a condition which he himself had done so much to bring about — depopulation.

De Saxe suggested that a marriage should be for a five-year period only, and that if there was no issue during that period its conclusion would terminate the contract. However, if there was a child the parents could renew the union for another five years, and so on; the marriage to become indissoluble only after three such renewals. Personally, le Maréchal professed to believe that "*une femme n'est pas un meuble propre à un soldat.*"

JAMES W. IVY

*New York City*

## THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE

SIR: This is to let you know that I think the September MERCURY . . . is the perfect example of what a magazine should be. . . .

Last year, because of the quality of the May, June, July, August and September issues of the MERCURY, I thought that the height in magazine journalism had been reached. Yet with the September 1947 issue I find the same satisfaction. I might say that "The Soap Box" feature is interesting. One article that I think is outstanding is the one on liberalism by Dorothy Thompson. Her articles are a chief attraction of the MERCURY, to me, at least.

In short . . . I think that the MERCURY, with Dorothy Thompson, "The Open Forum," "The Soap Box," an exciting format, the interesting articles, stories and features, is an example of what a great magazine should be.

R. G. FRIES

*Bridgewater, Mass.*



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# THE RECORD CABINET

by HOWARD L. GOODKIND

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THE past few months have added many new albums to the already phenomenal collection that is available to the record-buying public. Some have been excellent, more of them good, and a few frankly disappointing. *Handel's Messiah*,<sup>1</sup> *Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony*,<sup>2</sup> Ezio Pinza's *Mozart Arias*,<sup>3</sup> the *Bach Arias*<sup>4</sup> sung by Marian Anderson, *Handel's Great Elopement*<sup>5</sup> and Ravel's recently issued *Daphnis and Chloe Suite*<sup>6</sup> come to mind as the better releases. Among those that could have been improved were Serkin's *Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1*,<sup>7</sup> the Helen Traubel *Italian Arias*<sup>8</sup> and the little-performed *Second Symphony*<sup>9</sup> of Tchaikovsky.

Out of the entire crop of releases, however, three sets are outstanding: one because of its great scope and contribution to the world of music; another because of the new process employed to record it; and the third, because of the superb quality of the performance.

The first set is the complete collection of *Handel's Concerti Grossi*<sup>10</sup> in three albums, performed by the Adolf Busch Chamber Players. The Columbia people have displayed unusual courage and public spirit in manufacturing a set of this type which, despite its excellence and worth, will probably never make money in the record-stores. Its price is a considerable outlay for the average collector.

The *Concerti Grossi* were composed and put down on paper — rough drafts, final copies, etc. — in the incredibly short period of one month. There are twelve of them, and each is so different from the next that the entire set may be played at one sitting without causing the listener to feel that he is revisiting familiar ground.

The concerto grosso is a form of music which

preceded and offered a model for the concerto as we know it today. Instead of pitting a solo instrument against the entire orchestra as does our modern concerto, the concerto grosso contrasts one group of instruments against another. Handel's interpretations of this musical form were never twice alike — some with four movements, some with five, some with six. All vary in character with the master's mood. Some are joyous and bright — others gloomy and pensive. All, however, are carefully thought out and stocked with interesting harmonies and themes, set off by imaginative rhythmic devices.

Mr. Busch handles the entire set with an admirable technique and skillful manipulation of tone and color patterns.

\*

From a purely mechanical point of view, far and away the outstanding recording of the year thus far is the breathtaking performance of *Beethoven's Eroica Symphony*<sup>11</sup> by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Victor de Sabata. This album was issued by Decca as part of its "ffrr" (full frequency range recording) series, which is recorded and manufactured in England. I use the adjective "breathtaking" without experiencing any compunction. This set has the finest tone rendition of any recording I have ever heard including the plastics that have been released on this side of the ocean. Whatever the new process may be that Decca uses to record its music, it has made possible a strikingly new and worthwhile treatment of both the standard classics and less familiar modern music.

This new *Eroica* puts the Bruno Walter, Toscanini and Weingartner recordings out of the picture. From the first, powerful chords that open the symphony to the crashing coda of the last movement, this performance is an endless succession of magnificent effects. French horns sound richer than they do in concert halls. Violins are as thin and fine as spun-glass and the percussion section takes on brilliance and power

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<sup>11</sup> Decca EDA19, 7 records, \$15.75.

<sup>1</sup> Columbia MM666, 19 records, \$24.60.

<sup>2</sup> Columbia MM688, 4 records, \$5.85.

<sup>3</sup> Columbia MM643, 4 records, \$5.85.

<sup>4</sup> Victor DM108, 3 records, \$3.85.

<sup>5</sup> Victor DM1093, 3 records, \$3.85.

<sup>6</sup> Decca EDA29, 3 records, \$7.00.

<sup>7</sup> Columbia MM652, 6 records, \$9.35.

<sup>8</sup> Columbia MM675, 3 records, \$4.60.

<sup>9</sup> Columbia MM673, 5 records, \$7.10.

<sup>10</sup> Columbia MM685, 25 records, \$34.30.



that must be heard to be believed. Conductor de Sabata here proves himself to be among the world's finest interpreters of Beethoven.

Owners of record-changers that operate on the "knife" principle will find that the discs are one-half inch smaller than our twelve inch records and that they slip through two or more at a time. According to the classical music department at Decca, however, steps have been taken to mold all future sets in the standard American size.

\*

The Victor recordings of *Bach's Second and Third Suites in B Minor and D Major*,<sup>12</sup> and the *Second and Fifth Brandenburg Concertos*,<sup>13</sup> all performed at Tanglewood, Massachusetts, by Dr. Serge Koussevitsky and the Boston orchestra comprise another superb performance. In each of these albums, Bach's delicate and complicated improvisations are played meticulously, leaving little to be desired. It is always a pleasure to hear these pieces played, as they were scored, by small orchestras using authentic eighteenth-century instruments. The Boston group uses only half or less of its members in these recordings as contrasted to the Mengelberg recordings (also Victor) which employ the full modern orchestra with less pleasing results.

Especially noteworthy is the third movement of the Second Brandenburg Concerto with its spirited, staccato trumpet solo. Roger Voisin uses a tiny trumpet only ten inches long to perform the passage. The midget, valveless instrument is called a clarino and even experienced trumpeters shy away from it in fear of the flawless technique that it requires.

The masterly piano-playing of Lukas Foss in the Fifth Concerto also helps to make this album a memorable item for collectors. His performance is remarkable for its control and evenness; parts of his fluid cadenza are machine-like in their preciseness, yet free from the heavy-handed coloring that too many pianists allow to taint their Bach. Both albums are superior with respect to surface and instrument-balance. There are no disturbing mechanical defects. Although a choice between the excellent Busch recordings of the Brandenburg Concertos (Columbia) and the Koussevitsky album is difficult, prospective buyers would do well to choose the latter, which has better over-all performance quality.

<sup>12</sup> Victor DM1118, 4 records, \$4.85.

<sup>13</sup> Victor DM1123, 5 records, \$5.85.



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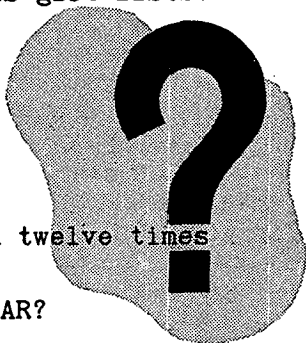
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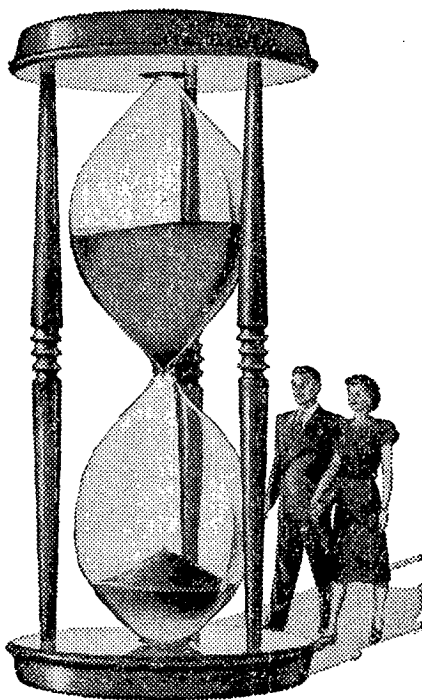
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